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Moltke's Military Correspondence 1870–71

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DEPARTMENT FOR MILITARY HISTORY

FIRST SECTION

THE WAR TO THE BATTLE OF SEDAN

PRÉCIS BY

SPENSER WILKINSON

WITH A MAP

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MOLTKE's early papers have here been condensed as far as seemed consistent with the retention of all the important points. No. 3 and part of No. 16 are omitted as their substance is given in other papers reproduced. As the dates advance condensation passes into translation in full.

The Prussian and Bavarian army corps are referred to by Roman numerals, I, II, &c., and divisions by Arabic numerals, 1, 2, &c.

The Prussian army corps must be distinguished from the army corps of the German Confederation (1815–66), called federal corps. These were supplied:

I, II, III, by Austria.
IV, V, VI, by Prussia.
VII, by Bavaria.
VIII, by Württemberg, Baden, and Grand Duchy of Hesse.
IX, by Saxony, Electoral Hesse, Nassau, Limburg.
X, by Hanover, Oldenburg, Mecklenburg, Holstein.

S. W.

ALL SOULS COLLEGE,
May 31, 1922.

MOLTKE'S CORRESPONDENCE, 1870

PART I

PREPARATORY WORK

1. [1857, à propos of a discussion at the Diet at Frankfurt a/M. on the subject of the garrison of Rastatt, the Minister of War (Waldersee) asked Moltke's opinion on the preservation of Prussia's right to supply part of the garrison, and on the subject of the abandonment of Landau as a federal fortress and the substitution of Germersheim for it.]

MEMOIR. Berlin, Nov. 28, 1857.

Germany's military frontier on the French side has two main sectors :

1. The line of the Rhine Wesel–Mainz, very strong ;
2. Mainz to Switzerland, protected only by Germersheim, Rastatt, and the Black Forest.

French main attack probably along line Strassburg–Ulm, minor attack from Metz and Valenciennes to occupy the Prussian forces on the lower Rhine.

Besides the fact that Belgium is neutral and that the attitude of Holland may be doubtful, the fortified Rhine is a serious obstacle to a French advance into North Germany. But France can so quickly collect a large army at Strassburg, where there is to be a permanent bridge over the Rhine, South Germany is subdivided into so many States, and the VII and VIII federal corps are so isolated, that France may count on an initial success in this direction.

In case of a French attack Prussia's course is dictated by the conditions :

Two corps quickly mobilized dispute the left bank of the Rhine until main Prussian army and X federal corps are collected between Cöln and Mayence. Then with 200,000 men Jülich and Saarlouis can be relieved, and an attack on the French on either bank of the Rhine will stop their advance into South Germany.

This view was adopted in 1831, when the South German States decided to collect the VII and VIII federal corps on the Main rather than on the Lech, so that there would be 300,000 men on the Main and one Prussian and IX federal corps in reserve at Bamberg.

Conditions have changed since 1831. There is less confidence in Prussia and more in Austria. Ulm, Rastatt, and Germersheim give South Germany more protection than there then was. Ever since 1853 Austria has pressed for a so-called central position on the Main: VII and VIII federal corps to assemble between Germersheim, Rastatt, and Stuttgart; an entrenched camp to be prepared on the central Rhine, to which Austria will send 150,000 men with 50,000 to follow. The Austrians were content with the positions assigned to Prussian and IX and X federal corps.

This means two central positions with divergent lines of retreat.

Prussia will always have the command of her own army and her own theatre of war bounded for defensive purposes by the Main.

Prussia's army is certain to be ready behind the Main in six or eight weeks. Austria says that she needs at the most twelve weeks to place 120,000 men on the Rhine. This will be facilitated by the construction of the railway from Linz by München and Ulm to Stuttgart. It is a question, however, not of distance but of the time needed to expand Austria's reduced army.

A French attack will be by surprise. There are in peace 150,000 men between Paris and the north-west frontier; there are railways from Metz, Paris, and Lyons to Strassburg, and it is twice as far from München and Nuremberg to Stuttgart as it is from Strassburg to Stuttgart. Therefore a central position between Stuttgart and Rastatt–Germersheim is too near the frontier. The South German States can directly protect their territories only if Austria places an army on the upper Rhine before or on the outbreak of hostilities. Without such an army the VII and VIII federal corps will not be able to stop their retreat until Ulm, perhaps not till the Lech.

If they consider the subject coolly the South German Governments will see that help can reach them soonest from Prussia, and that their line of retreat must be not to the east but to the north, to the Main.

The Prussian Army if assembled on the Rhine protects North Germany. If Austria cannot give the same protection to South Germany the fortresses of South Germany will be left to their own resources for defence.

Militarily it would not be prudent for Prussia to extend the first position of her army beyond the Main nor to weaken it by contributing to the garrison of a federal fortress in South Germany.

If political considerations make it necessary to contribute to such a garrison it must be remembered that Rastatt will probably be invested in the first few days after the outbreak of hostilities

and threatened with a formal siege. To withdraw the Prussian garrison at that moment would be to cause the place to fall, and Prussia would be held responsible for its loss.

Landau and Germersheim can be more easily supported from the Prussian central position.

Germersheim preferable, as locally stronger and covering a crossing of the Rhine. Landau, imperfectly constructed, dominated, accessible by rail from Strassburg, covers no important region. But even from Germersheim Prussian troops could not be recalled when war broke out.

Whether the military disadvantages are outweighed by political advantages not for me to say.

2. MEMOIR. Berlin, Oct. 1858.

I. *Military-political Conditions.*

Impossible to determine even in outline the way in which two great States will act at the outset of hostilities without also considering the military and political situation of the small States nearest to the theatre of war.

For a Franco-German war there are the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, and Sardinia.

Netherlands. Matters only on account of its friendly or hostile attitude towards Belgium. Country difficult to attack, but has not an army able to defend it. Nothing but a militia (four months' training) and fortresses in decay. Might have 30,000 men, short of officers and equipment. Seems likely to confine defence to that of the lines of Utrecht with advanced posts at Bergen op Zoom, Breda, and Bois-le-Duc, and to abandon Maestricht.

Doubtful whether King will keep a garrison in Luxemburg, of which the defence may be left to Prussia.

Hardly likely to help France to conquer Belgium. A Prussian invasion of Holland to lay hands on its great wealth would involve an imprudent dispersal of Prussian forces and probably a war with England.

Belgium. Since its independence been most prosperous and has developed a national spirit. No longer leans upon France. Regards France as the enemy of her independence, and England, Prussia, and Holland as certain allies.

Belgian neutrality, if respected, protects our west front.

France can quickly assemble a large army at Metz, but her attack on the lower Rhine needs a broad basis which only Belgium can furnish. Belgium won't join France, so France must invade

Belgium as the first step to attacking Prussia. Belgium can put 100,000 men in the field, but must use 40,000 of them as garrisons. The plan is to hold Antwerp until help comes.

Help won't come from Holland. England's army is in India. Perhaps 10,000 or 15,000 English troops could be landed at Ostend and Nieuport, but that would not suffice for an offensive against the French Army.

Effective help can be given only by Prussia. But not easily if the Belgian Army shuts itself up in Antwerp (the vote for the fortification of Antwerp has been thrown out in the Belgian Parliament). Namur would be better. Antwerp would keep part of the French Army busy, but would leave us under the necessity of reconquering Belgium.

Sardinia. Is the champion of Italian nationality and unity. A Sardinian minister said in 1856: 'No understanding possible between Sardinia and Austria so long as Austria holds an inch of Italian soil.' Sardinian Army burning to avenge the disgrace of 1848–9.

Can have 60,000 men ready at Turin in four or five weeks and add 40,000 from the fortresses.

France has a garrison in the States of the Church.

Thus Austria cannot neglect her southern frontier, and therefore cannot act in Germany either quickly or with large forces.

Switzerland. Separates Austria's forces in Germany from Austria's forces in Lombardy. Covers Franche-Comté, the open door into France. A French army once in Switzerland has a central position hard to attack, and can turn the defences both of South Germany and of Lombardy.

Very vital question whether Switzerland will be neutral. If she maintains her neutrality France would need a great effort to invade the country. Swiss feeling is with France, not with Germany. But probably Switzerland will use her forces to preserve her neutrality.

Very important for Prussia to cultivate good relations with Belgium and Switzerland.

Germany. Has a million soldiers. If Austria and Prussia act together France alone could hardly attack them, and in the long run England would be on their side.

Therefore France wants an ally and seeks one in Italy. France doesn't want territory in Italy or even in South Germany—only influence—but she does want the Rhine frontier. If Austria is driven out of Italy she will have neither the will nor the strength

to resist this French impulse. In peace Austria may push Prussia into the background, but in trouble Prussia will come to the front. If when Austria is threatened in Italy Prussia puts her army on the Rhine the South German States will follow Prussia and France find herself outmatched.

In 1830 the South German States trusted Prussia and looked to her. In 1848 the IX and X federal corps were to join the Prussian Army but the VII and VIII to assemble at Rastatt. Austria said she would send 150,000 men to the Rhine or Black Forest, with 50,000 to follow. But what would this mean ?

The VII and VIII federal corps can assemble at Rastatt or Germersheim as soon as at Ulm or Würzburg—in thirty to forty-one days. But if France takes the initiative they can never get to Rastatt, and have only the choice between Ulm and Würzburg.

If the South Germans rely on Austria they must retire to the Iller, the Lech, or the Inn, and their countries will be the theatre of war. But if they unite their forces at Würzburg with Prussia's no French army can get far into South Germany.

They may not see this in peace-time discussions, but in the hour of need they will see how they stand, and the question of the Command-in-Chief will settle itself.

II. *First Position of the Prussian Armies eventually in Connexion with the Federal Corps.*

Observation troops to be left on eastern frontier of Prussia. Forces available against France to be in the first instance assembled in three portions :

1. On the lower Rhine to defend Rhine province and the fortified Rhine;

2. Offensive army on the Main;

3. On the Saale ready to move to lower Rhine or Main according to the direction taken by French attack.

1. Army on lower Rhine :

VII VIII III X federal, 44th day	30th day	near Düsseldorf	In 4 weeks 100,000	In 6 weeks 135,000.

No need for more forces in this region. Nothing more difficult than for French to take Cöln and Coblentz in presence of a defending army and flanked as they are by Wesel and Mainz. No intention

to risk battle on left bank against superior army nor yet to abandon this region without resistance.

Action of, or in, Belgium will determine whether we send VII to Aachen and VIII to Trier, or merely observe the district covered by neutral territory and unite our forces on the Moselle against Metz Army.

2. Army on the Main :

IV (march), 36th day
V (rail), 32nd day } 86,000
VI (less 12th division), 42nd day } 120,000.
IX federal, 33rd day

This protects assembling troops of VII and VIII federal at Würzburg or Bamberg better than could Austrian corps arriving a month later while the federal corps were collecting at Ulm.

If VII–VIII federal then total of 200,000 on 42nd day.

3. Reserve Army on Saale (Halle and Weissenfels) :

II, G. } 66,000 { 46th day. / 40th day.

By this time we shall know whether Russia is arming and whether we need to take measures against Denmark. Also whether French main attack aims at Belgium and so at Prussia ; whether Belgium will join us if we help her ; whether Austria keeps her promise of help to South Germany or we are to be without any help, German or Austrian. In any of these events Reserve Army by Hanover and Cassel to lower Rhine. Then Main Army, 86,000, defensive on our left flank and Rhine Army, 165,000, offensive in Belgium and into France. In other events (Belgians passive at Antwerp, South Germans retreating) Reserve Army to Würzburg, Bamberg, and Bayreuth, and so to Main Army.

[The memoir of Oct. 1858 is substantially identical with that of Feb. 7, 1859, but an alternative plan is set out in the memoir of Feb. 26, 1859, printed in M. *Mil. Correspondence*, 1859.

In Feb. 7, 1859, are ten pages not in Oct. 1858, and they contain the statement that M. *doesn't yet know whether Prussia is going to take the French or the Austrian side* (*Mil. Corr.* 1859, p. 29) ; also (on p. 33) the idea of an offensive through Nancy towards Paris.

Feb. 26, 1859, aims at material compensation by gain of territory, i.e. Alsace and Lorraine. Plan now is two armies—one on Rhine and one on Main—and the weaker Main Army is intended to occupy the *Kriegsobject* ; the stronger Rhine Army to make this possible and to secure it by battles.

In Feb. 7 he leaves 1½ corps to face Russia ; in Feb. 26 he reluctantly leaves two.

Summary.

Oct. 28, '58 and Feb. 7, '59. { Rhine Army / Main Army / Reserve Army } Intention to go against French in Belgium or at Metz according to the direction of their attack and attitude of Belgium.

Feb. 26, '59. Object is to take possession of Alsace and Lorraine. Rhine Army to join Belgium and defeat French Army ; Main Army to lay hold of the *Kriegsobject*, Alsace and Metz.

May 19, '59. Belgium is going to be neutral. Object is to acquire Alsace and Metz.

Two ways : by march to Paris or by seizing Alsace.

Begin by seizing Alsace and march to Paris if necessary. Direction via Nancy on Paris.

Proposes to march at once from railheads on Rhine and Main to line of Saar (on 47th day) and then on to line Noméný–Moyenvic.]

3. 1860. A repetition of the ideas of 1859 (not abstracted).

4. 1861. (What France can do against Prussia and Germany.)

Strategical importance of Prussian fortresses for defence in a war against France.

(1) Prussia alone. Frontier from Sierck to Saarbrücken :

(*a*) through Belgium on Cöln; through Palatinate or South Germany against Mainz.

Therefore Prussia must assemble forces at Cöln and Mainz, and if possible also at Trier. (Belgians will be shut up in Antwerp (Brialmont's scheme) and England helpless.) This brings France up against our very strong Rhine front.

(*b*) Advance through South Germany brings in Germany. Austria, tied in Italy and her interior, can't help. Prussia can't prevent invasion of South Germany but can drive it back later on (VII and VIII federal can't stop it).

We can't tell in advance which line France will take, so our assembly must be ready for both.

Three corps on lower Rhine and three on Main in three weeks (can't be prevented by French, but they can anticipate us at Trier). Three other corps on Elbe or Saale, destined not to stay there but to reinforce the army either of Cöln or Mainz, or in case of mishap in South Germany to go to Würzburg or even Bamberg. Right wing on Rhine (with probably X federal) strong enough. Need be reinforced only if it takes the offensive, which would relieve Antwerp and aim at Paris and at overthrow of French Empire ; but this would not give us any conquests to annex, though we could demand compensation after beating the French Army on the Seine or Loire. Offensive from Mainz aims at smaller

but attainable goal, viz. annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. For this we must beat the French Army in one or more battles, besiege Metz and Strassburg, and cover the sieges with our army.

For defensive as well as offensive we want a large force on the Main :

(*a*) to advance northwards from Mosel line ;

(*b*) to attack French Army southwards on either bank of Rhine.

Main not flank position, but basis of an operation against enemy's flank.

Black Forest can't be directly defended either by South German States or by Prussia (or Austria). South German Army must fall back either on Mainz (to Prussians) or on Ulm (to Austrians), if any. Retreat to Ulm leads to South Germany being theatre of war or to dealings with France. But retreat to Prussian Army at Mainz makes it impossible for French to advance in South Germany.

South Germans think they will assemble at Rastatt and Germersheim. But they won't be able to do it, and will fall back on Mainz if there is a Prussian army there.

Therefore while three corps will suffice at Cöln, we must have all the force we can at Mainz and as soon as possible.

French can't go as in 1806 for Prussia (Berlin) so long as we have a strong army at Mainz. Our army there will draw them as a magnet. Our right flank is covered by Mainz and our left can't be turned without the French exposing their communications. This would be even more risky for them if Mainz facilitated more than it now does an offensive advance between upper Rhine and Main.

Mainz, though not Prussian, is Prussia's most important fortress—her shield and sword.

Even if beaten at Mainz we could retreat to Lahn or Sieg, cross to left bank at Coblenz or Cöln, and return from left bank to offensive.

Thus Rhine protects Berlin and the Marks.

Case of French offensive through Belgium against lower Rhine: French would contain Antwerp and Brialmont's new position. Maestricht has been abandoned as a fortress. Position between Dürren and Jülich (left flank), Roer defile to Gemünd (no road across it), and right flank supported by Jülich although demolished.

From Metz French can invade before even the 16th Division can be mobilized. Yet they must have force enough to observe Luxemburg and Saarlouis and to drive away our troops from

Trier, a region where a small force can delay them, as it can retreat to Cöln, Coblenz, or Mainz, and has plenty of good positions.

Advance from Metz on Cöln has its back to Luxemburg and Ardennes.

Any fortress on the frontier has the defect that if the enemy is ready first our troops can't be assembled at it in time and that it becomes effective only at a later stage, and then only if we can take the offensive in the right direction, if it has held out so long.

Luxemburg can hold for some weeks ; Saarlouis not long. Trier would be better (if it were a permanent camp of exercise like Châlons or a first-class fortress).

In that case we should be able to start from Mainz and cross the Moselle with our retreat secure.

If the French invade the Rhine province on the left bank they have not secured it till they have beaten our army.

They can't invade from middle Meuse through Ardennes without exposing a flank to our force at Coblenz ; but Coblenz is hard to take (three forts to reduce before they can cross the Rhine) and leads to difficult country, and the force after crossing can be attacked from Mainz.

Cöln only five marches from Liège with all communications covered. But then the place must be either attacked on left bank or invested on right, or French must first beat our lower Rhine Army and then besiege Cöln.

Wesel not much use to French ; they would have to cross the Rhine at Xanten and so to expose their communications.

Cöln thus infinitely important for defence of line of Rhine.

Best French plan for taking it would be, invest it on left bank, cross Rhine at Düsseldorf or Ruhrort, and attack our lower Rhine army.

In that case we must not retreat eastward facing west, but southwards facing north ; retire, if beaten, across Sieg and Lahn and fall back on Main Army.

Thus our Rhine front is immensely strong and could be endangered only if we tried the offensive on left bank before we were ready.

5. 1863. Now thinks that France will respect the neutrality of Belgium. French invasion of Rhine province in war against Prussia alone unlikely as France must start from short base Sierck–Saargemünd, would have to take Cöln, and would be exposed during the operation to flank attack from Coblenz or Mainz. French attack would therefore extend to South Germany.

Defence of Germany from Wesel to Schliengen (near Basel) requires three armies, on lower, middle, and upper Rhine, the centre one the strongest.

But the South German States cannot themselves put a strong enough army on the upper Rhine. Only Austria could do this, and she has enough to do elsewhere, and if free could hardly have her troops there in time.

If Belgium is neutral France, to attack Germany, must assemble her forces at Metz and Strassburg and operate against the Main, thus turning the line of the Rhine, separating South from North Germany and western provinces of Prussia from her eastern provinces.

But to get to the Main the French must first cross the Rhine, as an advance through the Palatinate is flanked from the Moselle, so that this advance must be covered on its left by a detachment.

Best point for crossing Rhine Mannheim. But French must cover their right flank against the VII and VIII federal corps.

French must therefore have a special force to cross the Rhine to attack South German contingents and cover their passage of the Rhine.

Thus France needs three armies:

1. To cover movement against VIII Prussian Corps near Trier	Say 45,000
2. From Strassburg to deal with South German forces .	90,000

leaving for

3. Principal army to attack on Main (army of Weissenburg and Bitsch)	115,000
	250,000

which is what France has available for the field.

France can't mobilize her whole army quicker than we can ours. But her railway lines admit of her moving her forces to the Rhine opposite Baden quicker than we can move ours to our Rhine line.

They could have on 16th day 45,000 men to disturb the mobilization of the 16th Division and the garrisoning of Luxemburg and Saarlouis.

Couldn't do much against Mainz before it would be safe. The German federal corps together (eight corps) are as strong as the whole French Army, and when the extra Prussian or Austrian corps are added the Germans have a decided superiority. But France can move her forces quicker to the frontier than Germany hers to the Rhine. As the frontier and the Rhine coincide on

the Lauter this is the danger spot. So it is easier for Germany to resist attack from Belgium than from Alsace.

Assembly of German main force. Three several regions for assembling :

1. *In Bavarian Palatinate.* Chief Army here, with VIII Prussian on Moselle, and VII, VIII federal on Murg. This the ideal, but the troops can't be there in time. They can get there by operations, but not be there at the start.

2. *Behind the Moselle.* Can have in thirty-three days :

1 Prussian corps, Trier 4 Prussian corps, Wittlich 1 Prussian corps, Coblenz	200,000

This would have to be supplemented by a second army on the upper Rhine (Austria's three corps). But the French can have superior forces assembled in either region before ours can be there.

3. *Chief forces on the Main.* Most practicable but only a make-shift, due to the division of Germany and to France having the initiative.

The defence of the line Wesel–Basel requires three armies :

A lower Rhine Army, which, as soon as Belgium is seen to be neutral, must move to the Moselle ;
A Main Army ;
An upper Rhine Army.

Prussia must and will provide the bulk of 1 and 2, to which any federal troops from the regions covered will be added. Her chief bulwark is the Rhine down to Mainz. Its right flank is in little danger, but its left flank must be made strong for offence.

The small States will wish to use their forces for their local defence, so IX and X federal will join Prussian Army.

But South German States (VII and VIII federal and III Austrian) must protect South Germany. Austrians probably not be in time. French can start from Strassburg with 100,000 in three weeks. Only way of defending Baden is by a flanking position in the Rhine valley, i.e. the line of the Murg with Rastatt. The retreat of these forces must be to the Main.

Four weeks to put down four Prussian army corps on Rhine, i.e. Cöln and Mainz.

VIII will assemble by march in its Rhine province and IV, V, VI, VII be brought by rail to points to be determined when it is known what the position in regard to Belgium is. III and II then follow. If by this time IX federal is on Main and VII, VIII

federal on upper Rhine, and the French have not crossed the frontier, we could proceed to take up position—

200,000 in Palatinate,
35,000 on Moselle,
80,000 on Murg;

but not much chance of doing this.

Shall we put more Prussian troops on Moselle or Main? Moselle better if we could get there safely in time. But we can't.

French can have 35,000 at Trier before 16th Division is mobilized.

[We ought to have either a standing camp or a first-class fortress at Trier.]

French can have 150,000 men between Trarbach and Trier on 28th day, when we could have only V, VII, VIII, which only make up 100,000.

So we can't choose Moselle for our region of assembling but must choose the Main.

Suppose the French (having 160,000 on 21st day) send 45,000 to Moselle and 115,000 in line Forbach–Lauterburg: the 115,000 advance by 29th to within reach of Mainz and Frankfurt. But we shall then have 100,000 men there (IV, VI, VII) and III coming up.

Accordingly French will probably not move till 26th day, when they will have 250,000 and we only 176,000 on whole western frontier.

They could then send a minor force to Trier, a strong advance-guard (after investing Landau and Germersheim) to Mannheim on 26th, and, following it with main body, appear on Main with 180,000 on 32nd day.

By then we should have 150,000.

To meet this initial French superiority the army of the Main must either:

(*a*) take the offensive from Mainz on the left bank of the Rhine;

(*b*) wait on the defensive behind the Main;

(*c*) conduct active defence of Rhine between Mainz and Mannheim.

(*a*) he seems to think doubtful.

(*b*) Position behind the Nidda between Höchst and Bonames. But danger of our left being turned and we cut off from Mainz and lower Rhine. It would be better to delay the French till more of our troops are up, and therefore to try

(*c*) Push VI at once on to Darmstadt and IV and VII to Bonsheim and oppose crossing at any point between Mannheim and

Oppenheim. Crossing of Rhine can't be forced against 100,000 men as the numerical superiority of the army trying to cross cannot be brought to bear.

Difficult for them to cross Rhine above Mannheim without losing time (which is on our side). If they cross at Strassburg they will be too late to attack us before we have been reinforced and are stronger than they.

French therefore divide and send an army across at Strassburg to clear the crossing for the other army, which makes straight for Mannheim across the Palatinate.

We can then throw our main force against either.

Can't settle in advance which is the best of the three plans for our army of the Main.

6. 1866. A. Against France alone.

He is sure of the South Germans and therefore proposes: South Germans 80,000, Mannheim in eight or ten days; Main Army and II reserve corps 90,000, Mainz.

B. France and Austria.

Austria will have to send back her Southern Army to Italy and can have 150,000 on the Danube. They will wait south of the Danube till French co-operation begins to be effectual. Our plan must be:

120,000 at Prague for defensive, based on fortified Dresden.

150,000 Elbe Army + three army corps at Mainz and Mannheim; these with North German troops will be 240,000.

Take off for Mainz (Prussian garrison only), Saarlouis, Coblenz, Cöln, Wesel, and Luxemburg 30,000, leaves

200,000 Prussians
100,000 other Germans } 300,000 field army against France.

Belgian neutrality not threatened, so we can put our whole force between Main and Neckar.

7. A. Four armies. 1, 2, 4 between Luxemburg and Saarbrücken. 3 on road Saargemünd–Mörchingen to cover right flank against Strassburg.

Three days' march up to line Thionville–Courcelles.[1]

B. Five days' march to line (Metz) Pont-à-Mousson–Moyenvic.

8. 1867, May 15. To Roon.

Luxemburg was given up as a federal fortress.

Question: shall we have a fresh fortress to make up for it? Most

[1] Maps in Moltke, *Kriegslehren*, II, Nos: 25 and 26.

natural would be to expand Saarlouis. Difficult to make Saarlouis capable of defence against modern artillery; the ground is unfavourable.

Difficulties of having a fortress close to the frontier. Must always have its guns, &c., and its garrison. We could manage the guns, &c., but not the garrison, which would consume a whole division on a war footing. Moreover, in the present tension with France, it wouldn't be finished in time.

France won't move till her troops have been rearmed (chassepôt).

Even if the French reorganization (300 battalions increased from 700 to 1,000 men each) were completed the North German forces are numerically stronger than the French.

[N.B.—In 1866 nine army corps. In 1867 added IX, X, XI, XII, i.e. thirteen.]

French have 1,014 guns, we have already 1,240.

Thus North Germany alone is quite strong enough to beat France.

What is more important than fortresses is to be able to have our army ready and on the spot in time. As things are we require thirty days from order to mobilize in order to have seven army corps on the Rhine.

But we can have substantially the whole army there in twenty-eight days from order to mobilize if only we make the following four lines of railway:

1. Börssum–Halberstadt.
2. Heiligenstadt to Minden or Göttingen.
3. Fulda–Hanau.

and also

4. Put second track on line Bebra–Guntershausen.[1]

If we construct 1–3 we shall have five independent through lines.

Desirable also to build a line Cöln–Trier,[2] and to have a second track on line along left bank of Rhine.

9. 1867, July 6. To Roon.

Doesn't approve of project for expanding Saarlouis. Railways more valuable than fortresses on the frontier. Entrenched camps have the defect that without an army they are weak, and the presence of an army can't be guaranteed. The history of entrenched camps has usually been that of capitulations.

Details. We don't want to destroy our bridges, and doubtful whether forts will prevent the French from destroying bridges and tunnels.

[1] All done before 1870.
[2] 1870, ready only from Cöln to Gerolsheim.

10. 1867, Sept. 6. To Bismarck.

Reassures Bismarck as to the significance of military measures reported from France. They are parts of a natural and necessary reorganization of the army and do not point to any intention of bringing on a war.

(N.B.—French Army up to date has only 50,000 chassepôts.)

11. 1867, Sept. 9. To Bismarck.

Even the reports, which he has already said need not cause alarm, were exaggerated.

12. 1867, Nov. 16.

Notes for Discussion with Departmental Heads of General Staff.

Proposes to leave against Austria

VI at Neisse.

I { at Görlitz via Bromberg, Frankfurt, Hansdorf (whence by march).

Half IX { at Görlitz, by rail.

Against Denmark

Half IX at Duppel.

Has available against France ten corps, 300,000 in four armies.

First Army VII, VIII.
Second Army III, IV, G.
Third Army II, XI, X.
Fourth Army V, XII.

5th division, Saarbrücken, 15th day.
16th division, before Trier, 15th day.
6th division, Kreuznach
IV, Neunkirchen via Kaiserslautern
VII, Wittlich
15th division, Morbach
II, XI } between Alzey and Mainz
V, XII } Mannheim
} 25th day. Altogether by 25th day 250,000.

G., X } Mainz later 65,000.

(leaving 150,000 against Austria and 250,000 against France, if G. and X kept against Austria, otherwise 315,000 against France, leaving I, VI, IX against Austria.)

Defence.

If French send parties along left bank of Moselle they must be attacked by 16th, 13th, 14th divisions.

If French send 50,000 towards Coblenz and Cöln VII and VIII will oppose them behind Moselle and centre armies will advance and compel them to retire.

If French main army advances in direction Metz / Nancy — Mainz / Mannheim

we shall learn from III at Saarbrücken.

Question then will be whether to stand

A, on 30th to 32nd day at Homburg (behind Blois and on Bexbach railway) with III, IV, XI, II, 125,000.

In this case V and XII on our left will ward off Strassburg Army. If we had to retreat it would be towards Coblenz: a favourable direction. But French left flank would be endangered by VII and VIII to be brought up by Birkenfeld, St.-Wendel, Tholey.

or B on Lauter / or C on Alsenz } 34th to 36th day G. and X come up.

In short

	fight at	with
A. 25th day	Neunkirchen, Homburg	III, IV, 65,000.
30th day	Kaiserslautern	III, IV, VII, VIII, II, XI, 200,000.
34th day		same with G. and X extra.

Offensive.

33rd day we have on line Neunkirchen–Zweibrücken:
III, IV, XI, II, G., X;
at St.-Wendel–Tholey VII, VIII;
at Landau V, XII.

Our objective French Army probably before us. Sure to find it if we advance towards Nancy–Pont-à-Mousson.

Concentrated march, artillery on roads, cavalry and infantry on by-roads.

Corps closed up, not more than nine miles long.

Advance-guards with strong cavalry half a march in front.

First corps starts at dawn, next after cooking, next next morning.

First Army.	*Second Army.*	*Third Army.*	*Fourth Army.*
Composed of: VII, VIII.	III, IV, and later G.	II, XI, and later X.	V, XII.
At: St.-Wendel and Tholey	Neunkirchen-Zweibrücken	Saargemünd	Landau
Following the roads:			
Kreuzwald	Saarbrücken	Püttlingen	
Füllingen	St.-Avold	Baronweiler	
One division as flank-guard by Bolchen to Contchen a/d Nied	Han. a/d Nied		

Front of all three armies on third day:

Füllingen–Baronweiler = only two German (nine English) miles.

Columns to be only two German (nine English) miles long.

We could therefore deploy 250,000 men to the front or to a flank if the French attacked.

French could attack us either:

from the Seille.

In that case they would have our Fourth Army on their flank, and, if they beat us, we could fall back on the line of the Rhine. This course (French assembly on Seille) enables them to keep in touch with their Strassburg Army.

But if we pushed quickly by Saaralben and Finstingen we should be on the inner line of operations between both.

If they had already united at Saarburg we should, by bringing up our Fourth Army, direct our battle so as in case of success to push the French armies quite away from Paris.

or: *from the Nied.*

More dangerous, as if successful it would cut all our communications. Each side would be fighting with its communications to a flank, but this less risky for the French with two fortresses and the Moselle handy.

But to act from the Nied the French would have to assemble their forces between Diedenhofen and Metz (a purely defensive plan) and would leave in the air so much of their army as, to save time, must be entrained to Strassburg. Their Strassburg Army would be in danger, as we can reinforce our Fourth Army from Homburg.

If, after four or five weeks, we still don't know where the French forces are, First Army can push a strong reconnaissance from Kedingen towards Reichersberg and Third Army towards Seille. In this case we must march towards the Nied or up the Saar.

French might also defend Moselle between Lunéville and Metz.

In this case we leave a division of First Army to observe the crossings of the Nied east of Metz and take post at Peltre, while Third Army move a corps to threaten Château Salins to cover the flank. Rest of the army (200,000) marches on Cheminot and Noméný, drives French outposts from Seille, and attacks Pont-à-Mousson.

Most probably we shall meet the French Army between the Blies and the Seille—for that assumption all these proposals are meant.

In any case Fourth Army must be strengthened to prevent interruptions from the south while we march west.

If the French Strassburg Army crosses the Rhine, so much the better. The Fourth Army would cross the Rhine after it at Germersheim.

13. March 21, 1868.

Case of a French attack before our mobilization is ended. We cannot foresee whether the French will wait for the regular equipment of all their forces or will attack with what they have at once ready.

We can only have one mode of assembling ours and must stick to it, but it must suit either event.

Our plan was made in Nov. 1867 (No. 12), and the *first question* is whether the new mobilization tables or the additions to our railways (line Hanau–Hersfeld, see p. 14) will shorten the time of our assembling on the Rhine. The *second question* is how the plan settled will suit the case of a French strategical surprise.

The French could reach the Rhine on 20th day with 70,000. The Rhine fortresses would not by then be fully armed nor the Landwehr garrisons have arrived. Line troops would still form the garrisons.

The French won't make for Wesel even if they violate the neutrality of Luxemburg. It would be to their disadvantage.

Cologne, 6 battalions of 14th division.

Aachen } 3 battalions of 14th division. These can stay to
Jülich } mobilize. Their retreat not threatened.

Coblenz, 3 battalions of 14th division. Can stay.

Saarlouis, 4 battalions of 16th division. Can neither be withdrawn nor reinforced. Might be withdrawn by steamer; but effect worse than active fighting.

Trier, 5 battalions and 5 squadrons. Reinforce with half a battery by steamer from Coblenz. Will receive their reserve men on eighth day. Plenty of good positions on road to Coblenz, where an action can be broken off, and can cross Moselle at Bernkastel.

Saarbrücken, 1 battalion and 5 squadrons. Retire first by Nahe railway and then by Simmern (west of Bingen).

Conclusions: we must not attempt in the first instance to hold the territory on the left bank of the Rhine.

I don't want to destroy engineering works on the railways, as we expect a fortnight later to return to the Saar. We can withdraw the rolling stock while the Saarbrücken detachment retires. We might destroy a railway embankment somewhere, to delay the French for a few days.

On 20th day we shall have most of XI, IV, V at Mainz. Perhaps the transport of III from Cöln up the Rhine may become impracticable.

Anyhow on 20th day we shall be so strong on the Rhine that the French cannot try to cross it.

We should then, as soon as possible, attack from Cöln, Coblenz, Mainz, and possibly Mannheim. The French railways will be busy for ten days moving troops at peace strength; then they will have to move 100,000 reservists, after clothing, equipping, and arranging them, and then to move the national guards to the fortresses.

The reaction would come.

14. German Assembling and First Movements. April 1868.

In a war this year we should probably have to do with France alone. But we must at first leave VI (to replace XII which can't stop at Dresden) and IX to protect Schleswig-Holstein against Denmark and the coast against the French fleet.

That leaves eleven army corps, 360,000, fully equal to the French Army. If the South Germans join us with even 40,000 or 60,000 we shall be superior. But our superiority depends on assembling fast enough.

Two periods:

First from 1st day of mobilization to 22nd day.

First Army, 60,000.

VII marching, VIII marching } Coblenz and upwards on Moselle and also using railway Cöln–Call.

Second Army, 60,000.

III railway Hanover, IV railway Halle–Marburg } Mainz and in part in Bavarian Palatinate.

Third Army, 70,000.

II railway Halle–Fulda, X railway Paderborn–Wetzlar } Mainz.

Fourth Army, 90,000.

Hessian division at Darmstadt.
Bavarian brigade at Landau.
V railway Leipzig–Würzburg, XI, 21st division, marching } Mannheim.
Württemberg division railway and marching Stuttgart.
Baden division railway and marching Rastatt.

Total 280,000.

First Army assembles at Wittlich.

Tries to support its advance-guard at Trier.

If superior French army attacks from Luxemburg First Army crosses Moselle at Bernkastel and defends river line. If not attacked approaches Second Army and keeps level with it. In case of battle in Palatinate attacks French left flank. 16th division fragment at Saarbrücken reinforced from Mainz from 5th division (of III) by Nahe railway so as to ascertain what enemy's force invades Palatinate.

Second Army.

If conditions allow continues transport by Nahe and Bexbach lines to line Homburg–Zweibrücken.

Third Army follows, marching, as reserve.

Decide at the time on the spot whether, before arrival of second echelon of transports, we may accept battle between Blies and Rhine with

Second and Third Army . .	130,000
Supported by First . . .	60,000
	190,000

If meanwhile French have invaded the Palatinate in force we cannot use the two divergent lines to move forward whole Second Army.

In that case Second and Third Armies can wait for reinforcements in strong position before Mainz, right flank on Donnersberg, and First Army moves through Hunsrück.

Saarbrück party to be given special orders about destroying Nahe railway.

Fourth Army is to support South Germans.

South Germany best protected by invasion of France.

If by 22nd day French not crossed upper Rhine Fourth Army assembles on line Neustadt–Landau (joined by Badeners crossing at Maxau, Württembergers at Germersheim) and follows chief army as a left echelon.

In that case French Strassburg Army won't cross Rhine (and a crossing at Breisgau harmless); but must attack left wing of our advance. As we shall be on the inner lines we can reinforce Fourth Army for a counterstroke, and meantime keep chief army on the defensive.

If before we are assembled the French have crossed the Rhine V and XI would march up right bank, pick up Württembergers and Badeners, and move against enemy's communications.

If Württembergers and Badeners don't join Fourth Army we send only a corps of observation to Neckar and march all four armies into France. . . .

SECOND PERIOD to 30th day.

Immediately after the first set of troop transports would come:

XII by Corbetha–Fulda.

(22nd division marches to join XI corps.)

In case after three weeks the conditions show that in Schleswig the 18th division and at Dresden a Landwehr garrison will suffice:

17th division by Kreiensen–Wetzlar

I army corps by Cassel

to the Rhine.

After three weeks Bavarians also will be assembled at Würzburg and Nördlingen.

If the French have not yet invaded South Germany, Bavarian corps would either co-operate with Fourth Army or actually join it by

Stuttgart–Bruchsal,
Heilbronn–Heidelberg,
Aschaffenburg–Darmstadt.

Ordre de Bataille would be:

First Army, VII and VIII .	60,000	Duke of Mecklenburg or v. Herwarth.
Second, III, IV, G. . .	111,000	Frederick Charles.
Third, II, X, XII, I . .	120,000	Steinmetz.
Fourth, V, XI, one Baden division, one Württemberg division, two Bavarian corps	140,000	Crown Prince.
	430,000	

Third Army reserve for First and Second.

A second reserve army eventually of 17th division + VI, making a total of 480,000 and useful for securing communications.

Bavarians at Nördlingen–Würzburg so as to assemble in their own country.

In case of French invasion temptation to I Bavarians to go to Ulm, which would draw the French away from us.

In case we can advance with all our forces on left bank of Rhine I Bavarians can join us by Maxau–Germersheim.

In case it proves needless for whole Fourth Army to go to Strassburg I Bavarians, posted at Vendenheim, might (after we had taken the barring forts by assault) cover the important railway Mannheim–Weissenburg–Vendenheim–Nancy.

Or Bavarians might besiege Strassburg.

15. May 13, 1868.

REPORT TO BISMARCK ON CONFERENCE WITH BAVARIANS AND WÜRTTEMBERGERS.

The difficulties of a coalition

It is a question not of asking the South German States to do what is militarily correct to attain the purpose of the war, but what in view of their own security they are able and willing to do.

An attack on France with superior forces would keep all the French forces busy and so protect *all* Germany. All the German States would join. But it involves the political initiative and greater readiness in a military sense than South Germany has yet acquired.

Upper and lower Rhine best protected by an army on the middle Rhine. We can assure the South German States that it will be there.

Two means of defending them :

1. Direct. South German States combining their forces, say, at Rottweil to defend Schwarzwald or supported by Ulm to hold the Iller. We think it the wrong way, but we don't object. In this case no North German forces would be used, both by reason of distance and to assure the independence of the South German States.

2. Indirect. Based on North German forces on the Neckar and Main, advancing against the enemy's flank and communications and compelling his prompt retreat.

Two Prussian corps, 60,000 men, told off to combine with Württemberg-Baden divisions and two Bavarian corps, forming a left wing army of 140,000, to advance, according to the point the enemy has reached, up the Neckar or the Rhine, and if the enemy is only threatening invasion, up the left bank of the Rhine. This army can be indefinitely reinforced if the enemy sends larger forces against South Germany, as he must then be weaker against our chief army. If he abandons his crossing of the Rhine this army will act with the principal army.

The plan requires the South Germans to be ready in time.

By 21st day from order to mobilize given from Berlin for North German troops, South Germans must be ready for march or transport, in large units, within their own territories, must have collected the rolling stock on the lines to be used, and must have magazines to supply and transport to move supplies to their troops.

Points of concentration.

Baden division: Southern portion *Rastatt.*
Northern to join and move on with the left wing army to relieve Rastatt.
Württemberg division: Stuttgart–Ludwigsburg.
Bavarian I: Nördlingen.
II: Würzburg.
Palatinate troops to form a brigade at Landau (retreat if necessary to Germersheim).

This is of course only assembly, not strategical deployment, which will probably be effected in the course of the operations.

Suppose French by 21st day to have passed the Black Forest, Prussian corps of left wing will advance by Heilbronn, Ludwigsburg, Stuttgart, picking up Württemberg division, Baden division from Rastatt, and II Bavarians from Würzburg. I Bavarians at Ulm protect Bavaria and by advancing cover a part of Württemberg.

Left wing army being given in any case numbers superior to the French will attack at once in a direction threatening all their communications.

Suppose French after crossing Rhine move down the valley to attack our troops on the Neckar, then—

Württemberg division to Bruchsal,
II Bavarians by Darmstadt and Heidelberg to join left wing army,
I Bavarians by Stuttgart also to join left wing army.

If we decide quickly enough for war we may be able to assemble left wing army in Palatinate before enemy has crossed the Rhine. In that case the South German contingents would cross at Maxau, Germersheim, and Ludwigshafen to join the Prussian corps at Landau.

16. 1868 AND JANUARY AND MARCH 1869.

A. *First Assembly of the Army in a War against France alone.*

We have the advantage of moving all our forces on six through railway lines to the Bavarian Palatinate.

The French, to use their railways fully, must assemble their army in two groups, at Metz and Strassburg, separated by the Vosges, so that we shall at the start be on inner lines between them.

No need for any field army directly to defend lower Rhine, which is protected by Belgian neutrality (whether respected or not) and by distance from the French frontier.

In the Palatinate we shall be as near to Aachen and Cöln as the

French would be at Thionville and Mézières. Our operation along the left bank of the Rhine across the Moselle will take theirs in rear and make them front south with their communications to their flank. Similarly a mistake directly to defend the upper Rhine or Black Forest. An advance up-stream from the Palatinate is more effective even if the French have already crossed the Rhine. Surest defence of upper and lower Rhine is to invade France with superior forces, and for that we have but to assemble in time the forces we have.

Four armies :

First (right wing) Army, Wittlich, VIII and VII . .	60,000
Second (main), Neunkirchen, Homburg, III, IV, X, G. .	130,000
Third (left wing), Landau, V and XI	60,000
with South Germans	80,000
Fourth (reserve), combined IX (i.e. 18th and Hessian division), XII	60,000
and eventually I, II, VI	100,000

Thus we take the offensive with at least 300,000 and in favourable circumstances with 500,000 men.

[Follow detailed notes on the arrangements for the several army corps and for coast defence.

Also further notes on the arrangements to be made in case the French move on Belgium or towards lower Rhine.]

B. *First Assembly of the Army in a War against France and Austria.*

(Not abstracted.)

17. Berlin, Dec. 1, 1868.

To Col. Veith and Lt.-Col. Count Wartensleben.

Might it not be better to transport the artillery reserves before the cavalry reserves ? In case of retreat of Second Army cavalry more useful than artillery. But in case of a battle at Marnheim artillery more useful.

In revising the tables see if we can't get the Second Army fully ready for action even at the expense of the Reserve Army, and in any case V before XII, which must be relieved before it can start.

18. Winter of 1868–9 (' good for 1870 too ').

Where to place the army at the start.

If we go to war with France Austria's attitude will be either hostile or doubtful. To divide our army equally against them

would be to be superior to neither. We must defend ourselves with weak forces against one in order to attack the other in strength.

The Rhine with its fortresses gives us a line of defence against France such as we have not against Austria, a line which 100,000 men can hold against any superiority for from four to six weeks.

But if we merely defend ourselves against France the South German States will not be with us, though they may not be against us. The French would turn our Rhine front by way of Worms and operate through Franconia against Berlin, while our principal army would be checked before Olmütz or the Danube. Possibly the Austrians would avoid a decisive battle in Bohemia or Moravia, and wait behind Olmütz or the Danube for French successes. Austria in financial difficulties, with her peace cadres, takes a long time to arm, and we should probably have a free hand against France for six or eight weeks if we took the initiative.

Neither Austria nor France is strong enough to have a chance, without an ally, against North Germany. So if Austria begins to arm we must at once declare war against France. The appearance of aggression must not deter us, for we may be sure that Austria would not arm unless both Powers had determined upon joint action, for which France would give her ally time to prepare.

If we invade France French pride will not wait for Austria. France is the more dangerous and the better prepared of the two, and there we are sure to find an army that will stand and fight. The size of the armies, their close concentration, and the difficulty of feeding and handling them will force both sides to a quick decision, so that there must be a collision during the first few weeks, and if it turns out favourably for us the result may be that Austria will sheathe her half-drawn sword.

Even if, while we were trying to reach a quick decision beyond the Rhine, Austria had fully armed and had occupied a part of Silesia and the Marks, provided our fortresses held out and our defending army could put off the decision without being defeated, nothing would be definitively lost. In France the first battle would overthrow the dynasty, and as we want nothing from France we could soon come to terms with the new Government.

For all these reasons I propose to devote ten army corps to the attack upon France and three to defence against Austria. To reinforce the three and for the active defence of the coast mobile Landwehr divisions must be formed, and we must keep back the 17th division to watch Denmark, replacing it in the IX army corps by the Hessian division.

Of course all our forces will be brought up against France if we have no other enemy at all or even are unlikely to have another for some time.

1. *Defence against Austria.*

The more complete Austria's preparations against us the later will be the date when she will be ready in superior force.

In 1866 she had 340,000 men in the field, but took four months to have them ready. No reason to think she could do better now.

She cannot denude all her provinces of troops, and as she must consider both Russia and Bavaria she must put some of her troops on frontiers other than Prussia's. She will hardly leave Russia a free hand in the Danubian Principalities and Galicia in order to throw her whole weight against us. Russia can put 8 divisions at Bender, 12+2 cavalry divisions at Woloczysk, and 2 near Brody, and can also put 18 infantry and 2 cavalry divisions at Czenstochau, which threaten to take in rear an Austrian advance through Silesia.

Austria must probably assemble an army of observation at Olmütz and another on the Inn, and will only be able to use against us the balance remaining over. Even if Russia does not interfere at first the Austrian operations in Silesia will be in more danger from a Russian army the further they proceed.

The most probable course for Austria is to march straight for Berlin from Bohemia by the right bank of the Elbe, which otherwise would have to be recrossed between our fortresses in the teeth of our army.

This is the operation which we have to meet.

The most convenient corps to leave against Austria (when we want to get all the North German forces quickly on to the French frontier) are I and II, to be reinforced by 1 and 3 mobile Landwehr divisions to a strength of 83,600. We must leave the Baltic coast to be protected by the forces told off to protect the coast of the North Sea, and indeed a French expedition to the Baltic is improbable.

We must also leave VI in Silesia . . .	30,000
With the above	83,600
.	113,600

This force we cannot collect at one spot, e.g. Görlitz, for we could neither denude Silesia of troops nor move XII from Dresden until it has been relieved by at least a division of Prussian troops.

VI best assembled on line Neisse–Frankenstein to observe Austrians and threaten their railway at Wildenschwerdt. If the Austrians invade Silesia from Olmütz (hampered by dread of Russia) VI, not being strong enough to defend Breslau, will retire through Schweidnitz, keeping on their flank. If they invade Lusatia with their whole army VI can be brought up safely behind the mountains to Görlitz (using two railways).

Our main defensive force must not put itself right in the way of the Austrian main army nor retire towards Berlin so as to lead the enemy thither. Better to act against their flank from the Oder or the Elbe. For the first of these plans we should assemble it at Görlitz, where it could be joined by VI and be within reach of Russian help. But it is a doubtful step to join your army to that of a stronger ally.

Better to act against Austrian flank from the Elbe, behind which our defending army is in communication with our principal army on the Rhine, and until reinforced from there finds a safe refuge in Magdeburg. The Elbe and its fortresses offer the greatest possible advantages for a flank attack. Whenever we advance from a bridge-head we force the enemy to form front to a flank. In case of mishap we have a safe retreat across the river, and so draw the enemy away from Berlin. We needn't be afraid of letting the enemy pass us ; the further he goes on the greater the advantage of our position. But of course Berlin must have some defence against a raid. As the enemy advances he must detach to invest our bridge-heads—Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg. Thus he may lose his numerical superiority before reaching the capital, and a skilful leadership may unite all our forces in order to risk a decisive battle with our line of retreat upon Magdeburg.

The operations from a flank being more effectual the further up-stream it begins, we must assemble at Dresden

1, 2, 3, 4 infantry divisions,
1 and 3 Landwehr divisions,
2nd cavalry division ;

and at Görlitz 1 cavalry division, whence it can join VI.

If just before outbreak of hostilities we move our principal force to Stolpen (and the Görlitz force to Bautzen)—at Stolpen the right flank is protected by impossible rocky mountains—we may be able to fall upon him with all our strength while he is debouching from the Lusatian mountains. In any case we should draw him after us towards Dresden.

South German States.[1]

We mustn't expect more from them (as in any coalition) than what is in the unequivocal interest of all parties.

In a war with France alone the immediate junction of the Bavarian Army with the North German forces on the middle Rhine best protects Bavarian territory against a French invasion, and if correct military views prevail at München this plan will be adopted. But this course cannot be expected if Bavaria has to defend herself against Austria. In that event Bavaria would make extreme exertions and probably assemble 60,000 men on the lower Inn. This would also give us all the help we can expect from Bavaria. The Bavarian Army in rear of the Austrians assembling in Bohemia and Moravia also threatens Vienna, so that Austria must use against it a force equal, if not superior to it. Against that Austrian force the Bavarians might not be able in the long run to defend München, but they could perhaps delay it before Ingolstadt until the general decision. What we cannot consent to is the Bavarians starting by putting their army to wait at Ingolstadt; we must require them to exchange shots with the Austrians at once.

Württemberg and Baden, more immediately threatened by France than by Austria, must be expected to join in our offensive.

If we succeed in obtaining an early decision against France, even if the Austrians have meantime made progress in Silesia or the Marks, the direction of our operations against them would be through Württemberg and Bavaria.

Everything depends upon our taking the field against France promptly and with superior forces.

2. *Offensive against France.*

The plan of offensive operations against France is simpler. It consists simply in making for the enemy's principal force and attacking it wherever we find it.

The difficulty lies in carrying out this simple plan with very large masses.

The French active army when mobilized consists of 336,000 men.

Deduct for Algiers	35,000
and at present in Rome	5,000
Leaving available	296,000

Some of these, if we invade France, will be required to garrison Strassburg, Metz, Thionville, Lyons, and Paris—at least 50,000.

[1] See No. 15, pp. 22–3, where this is better expressed.

Even if no troops are required to watch the Pyrenees and the Channel we can hardly meet in the field at first more than 250,000.

The ten North German corps together make 330,000.

There remain in France 93,000 reserves. The best use of them would be to bring up the battalions from 800 to 1,000 men, which would make the French field army equal to the North German. The intention, however, seems to be not this, but to form a separate army of reserve, which implies forming new units and gives us a further reason for moving quickly.

We have a reserve of 26,000 men in the already organized Guard and 3rd Landwehr divisions which we may expect to bring into the field in the course of the campaign.

If we can count with any certainty on 30,000 men of the Baden and Württemberg divisions we shall at the outset have 300,000 against 250,000, and later on probably 386,000 against 343,000.[1]

Most important to make the most of the superior numbers which we shall have at the start even with the North German forces alone.

This superiority will be increased at the decisive point if the French indulge in expeditions to the North Sea coast or to South Germany.

The main point is so to concentrate the superior numbers we possess that they can be made use of at the decisive moment, so that the question is: Where may we expect to find the enemy?

The neutrality of Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland confines the theatre of war to the space between Luxemburg and Basel.

If France were to disregard neutrality so as to advance through Belgium against the Prussian Rhine, she would have complications with England and weaken herself by 80,000 or 100,000 men left to face the Belgian Army at Antwerp. Her further advance across the Meuse we could more effectually meet from the Moselle than from the Rhine. Our Rhine front is so strong that it needs no immediate reinforcement, and the distance to Cöln is greater from Brussels than from Mainz, Trier, or Kaiserslautern. Our advance from the south compels the enemy to face us with his communications through Belgium (already threatened) to his flank. Thus an original assembly of our army south of the Moselle enables us to meet this invasion of the Rhine province, and also to anticipate it by the invasion of France. But, apart from complications with England, a violation of Belgian territory offers too little prospect of success to be probable.

[1] Note of 1870: Probably (with 70,000 South Germans) 400,000 against 250,000.

Difficulties not less would confront a French attempt to open communications with Austria through Switzerland. To conquer and hold the country 100,000 men would be required. Moreover, France and Austria have no reason why their armies should unite; they have different aims and separate theatres of war; their only common purpose is to overthrow Prussia's power.

We may therefore assume as probable that the French Army will be collected on the line Metz–Strassburg in order to turn our strong Rhine front, to advance towards the Main, to separate North from South Germany, to make an agreement with South Germany and advance to the Elbe.

The best way to meet any such plans is to collect all the forces of North and South Germany south of the Moselle in the Bavarian Palatinate.

The French might be tempted to advance with part of their forces from Strassburg against South Germany. But an advance up the Rhine against the flank of such a march would oblige the enemy to move north to clear himself. Once the Baden–Württemberg corps has joined our left wing we can so reinforce it from the Palatinate as to seek an early decision, say near Rastatt, which in case of success must be ruinous for the enemy. For that purpose we need not hesitate to detach from our principal army, as the enemy in its front will be proportionately weaker by all the forces he has detached to cross the Rhine.

If the South German contingents prefer the direct defence of their territory in a position behind the Black Forest or at Ulm we are relieved from giving them direct aid. We can leave them to their fate, as the march of a French army by Stuttgart and München will not have any effect on our strategical flank till after we have had a decisive battle against the enemy in our front, who by detaching a force in that direction will have weakened himself.

If the French wish to make the most of their railway system for a quick assembly of all their forces they must put down their troops in two main groups, at Strassburg and Metz, separated by the Vosges. If the Strassburg portion, which will evidently be the smaller, is not destined for South Germany it can join the main body on the upper Moselle only by marching.

In the Palatinate we shall be on the inner line of operations between the two groups. We can fall upon one or the other, or if only we are strong enough, upon both at once.

The assembly of all our forces in the Palatinate protects the lower and the upper Rhine and admits of an offensive into the enemy's

country which, if we adopt it in time, will anticipate any irruption of the French on to German soil.

It is a question only whether, without risk of being disturbed while our army is assembling, we can venture to put it down in the Palatinate beyond the Rhine. To this in my opinion the answer is that we can.

On the

[1] 12th day the first of our troops detrain near the French frontier,

[1] 15th day two army corps will have their combatant troops there,

[1] 20th day we shall have 300,000 men there,

[1] 24th day the armies will be complete with their train.

There is no reason to think that the French can assemble their *mobilized* troops any sooner. No experience on this point, for since Napoleon I France has had only partial mobilizations, filling up the marching portion of the army out of the portion that remained at home.

No doubt as their garrisons and camps are accumulated in the north-eastern part of the country, and as their system of railways is suitable and has plenty of rolling stock, they can in a very short time collect 150,000 men on the frontier. The proceeding would suit their national character and has been discussed in military circles.

Suppose such an army, well supplied with cavalry and artillery, to be assembled round Metz on the fifth day and to cross the frontier at Saarlouis on the eighth, we should still have it in our power to halt our railway transports in time and to detrain our principal force on the Rhine. The invasion would have six marches to that river and would there be stopped by equal forces on the 14th day. As we hold the river we could take the offensive across it a few days later with more than double the French numbers.

The disadvantages at a later stage of such a proceeding on the part of the French are too palpable for it to be adopted, and it is in any case impracticable if we take the initiative.

If then a deployment in the Palatinate is practicable no objections against assembling all our available forces there and on the Moselle can arise out of the apparent denuding of our front on the Rhine. It has been already pointed out that this front is protected by Belgium's neutrality and, if that were violated, by the distances, by our own strength, and by the operations.

A force as large as we shall bring against France can naturally operate only when subdivided into several armies.

[1] In 1870 these dates were changed to 10th, 13th, 18th, 20th nearly all.

Difficulties not less would confront a French attempt to open communications with Austria through Switzerland. To conquer and hold the country 100,000 men would be required. Moreover, France and Austria have no reason why their armies should unite; they have different aims and separate theatres of war; their only common purpose is to overthrow Prussia's power.

We may therefore assume as probable that the French Army will be collected on the line Metz–Strassburg in order to turn our strong Rhine front, to advance towards the Main, to separate North from South Germany, to make an agreement with South Germany and advance to the Elbe.

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20. MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL STAFF. May 6, 1870.

The operations against France will consist simply in our advancing in as dense a formation as possible for a few marches on French soil till we meet the French Army and then fight a battle.

The general direction of this advance is towards Paris, because in that direction we are most certain to hit the mark we are aiming at, the enemy's army.

On the straight road from the Palatinate to the French capital lies Metz. This fortress we shall pass on the left and merely observe.

The nearest line on which to deploy, unless there is a battle sooner, is that of the Moselle from Lunéville to Pont-à-Mousson.

Second Army first line; Fourth in second line; First and Third Armies covering the flanks. Our initiative will prescribe the law to the enemy.

On the line Lunéville–Pont-à-Mousson we shall have two railways behind us; there, if not sooner, there must be a decisive battle, beyond which details cannot be foreseen.

Apart from the resistance which we may meef before reaching that line the difficulty of this advance of 68 (English) miles consists in moving the masses in a small space.

If the French move to meet us in their full strength the difficulty is the same for both sides. But not if they wait for us ready assembled or move forward to meet us for a short distance deployed in fighting formation.

In order to be able to concentrate for battle we need a day which the advance-guard of the army must secure for us. The advance-guard must also find exactly where we shall meet the enemy. It must therefore be strong, especially in cavalry.

Advance-guard to be formed of 5th infantry division and a cavalry corps, for which are available 3, 4, 10, and Guard cavalry divisions (76 squadrons) under a special commander. 6th division in support.

The business of the cavalry is not to remain massed (as it would for battle), but to go forward in various directions with divisions and to send detachments from these until the enemy's main force is found. The infantry division can support these detachments by small parties in carriages, but will in the main be massed in order to take up strong positions on which the cavalry can fall back.

The cavalry may move several marches beyond the infantry, its retreat being guaranteed by its strength.

For the larger bodies of infantry there must be no retrograde

movements. Their concentration must always be to the front. The 5th division is secured by the cavalry against the danger of striking on the concentrated enemy, and with the cavalry's aid it can resist an army corps for twenty-four hours. It must be a day's march in front of the army.

The Second Army will be on the 19th day assembled on the frontier (Bildstock–St.-Ingbert) but without its trains. The Fourth Army, too, will still have to come up. Its successive echelons can march on, as they arrive, towards Zweibrücken, but the last of them will need four days to close up, and the full deployment (*Aufmarsch*) behind the Second Army will not be complete till the 24th day.

Not advisable to cross the frontier till we are ready for a battle any day.

In these circumstances the marches of all corps and divisions must be specially determined from general head-quarters.

March to the Moselle with Second and Third Armies in three principal columns, in two echelons, with a breadth and depth of one march, so that the concentration of 150,000 men on the centre or even on a wing of the first line can be effected in one march.

Each corps takes its whole train with it. The trains to halt (park off the road) only when the advance-guards report the enemy at hand.

Marches to be $2\frac{1}{2}$ *meilen* (19 kilometres, 11·8 English miles). Start early in the morning.

IV and X each to have its own advance-guard.

As the cavalry divisions of the Second Army will be out in front the depth of an infantry division will be about six hours.

Accordingly the Fourth Army at about noon will come upon the trains of the Second Army. But it may then bivouac, and if need be can resume the march in the afternoon.

Political situation makes it unlikely that the First Army will be resisted in its advance to join the right wing of the Second.

But likely enough that the Third Army may have to be reinforced from the Fourth. If this has been done the rest of the Fourth can follow the First and Second.

But if the French have their principal force concentrated in our front the Third Army joins in the general advance to the Moselle ; yet we must always be ready to push towards the south.

With a view to concentration we must every day note the transverse roads.

[This paper was accompanied by the table printed on p. 134, showing the projected marches of the North German corps only.]

PART II

MOBILIZATION AND ASSEMBLY ON THE FRONTIER

21. Pencil note undated, ? 13 to 15 July, on a report from Count Waldersee of July 12, 1870.

French collection of ships doesn't point to a landing, but to transport of troops from Algiers or Civita Vecchia. That of ironclads rather to a bombardment of our harbours. No need to call out Landwehr, but rather to arm the coast batteries.

22. Berlin, July 16. To Lt.-Col. Witzendorff, Cologne.

No damage to be done to our railways except such as we can quickly repair for our own advance.

23. Berlin, July 18. To General War Department.

No need to call out Landwehr for coast defence. If defence necessary local commander use such troops as are there. Corps commander to wait for appointment of a governor-general.

24. Berlin, July 18. To Ministry of War.

No danger from Austria so far. Avoid fuss on the Austrian frontier. VI to be placed alongside railway in Silesia. 23rd regiment can be sent to the Field Army.

25. Berlin, July 18. Note for the Records.

Württembergers mobilized by 26th July. Will then march off behind Badeners, sending two cavalry regiments to reinforce them at Rastatt.

They ask for a Prussian general to command a division, and for a Prussian general staff officer; also for a governor for Ulm, and wish to be joined to a Prussian division.

Bavarians will have a division ready to fight but not mobile at Landau by July 25. Not ready with two corps on the Hardt till 22nd day, Aug. 7. They ask for the King's orders.

26. Berlin, July 18.

To Lt.-Gen. v. Frankenberg, Cöln (Commandant).

On destroying or damaging railways.

27. Berlin, July 18. To Major v. Grolmann, München (Attaché).

1. Bavarians are to hold Landau, Germersheim, bridge at Maxau. Prussian corps from Posen will be up sooner than Bavarians.

2. Two Bavarian corps to be under command of Crown Prince.
3. Helmet or forage caps. Not decided and does not matter.
4. None but persons with duties to join G.H.Q.

28. Berlin, July 18.

To Lt.-Col. v. Leszinski, Karlsruhe (Chief of G.S. Baden Division).

On barrage on Rhine at Rastatt and Germersheim. Waldersee (attaché at Paris) thinks the French won't begin operations before July 24.

July 18. King's orders to North German Federal Army and its parts to be communicated through chief of general staff of army.

29. Berlin, July 19. To Col. v. Witzendorff, Coblenz.

Waldersee says French won't move before 24th. Table of dates of arrivals of troops of III and X at Neunkirchen. If French troops in any strength cross frontier during these movements detrainment must be carried out further in rear.

Important to have a cool and prudent officer at Saarbrücken. Pioneer companies and staff officers ordered to Saarsbrücken.

Notes on first movements, Nos. 30–35 :

30. Berlin, July 19.

If the French had meant to wait for their operations till their reserves were up they would not have declared war to-day.

Probably they will cross the frontier to-morrow, our 5th day of mobilization.

Being weak without reserves they may abandon the move into South Germany and invade Palatinate on the line Saarbrücken–Bitsch. Then they could be at Marnheim on 10th day and attack on 11th day of mobilization. By then we shall have only half of III, IV, XI + 25th division, 60,000 men, and inadequate artillery.

We can't be sure of Marnheim as place of concentration, and French may be before Mainz on 12th day.

On 13th day we should have at Mainz :

III, IV, IX	100,000
At Germersheim XI Baden and part of Württemberg divisions	50,000

If the French do not go from Strassburg to the right bank of the Rhine XI had better go to Mainz.

31. If we learn in the next few days that the French are marching out of their garrisons without reserve men they must intend a strategic surprise.

They wouldn't do it merely to disturb the mobilization of the 16th division; the garrisons of Trier and Saarbrücken, and the commanders of Landwehr dépôts, would send back their stores to Coblenz and order their reserve men thither. The French action would not affect our mobilization nor the transport of our corps to the Rhine, but only their movement on to the frontier (*Aufmarsch*).

We couldn't prevent an invasion of the lands on the left bank of the Rhine. . . .

At first we should have against us an army of many weak battalions fully officered, plenty of N.C.O.'s, with cavalry and artillery, about 130,000 or 150,000.

This army might be on the frontier on the eighth day of mobilization and reach the Rhine in seven or eight marches.

If in the first eight days they could clothe, arm, and send on their reservists they could deploy near the left bank of the Rhine instead of on the line Metz–Strassburg.

Evidently important for us to have troops at Landau, to interrupt Nahe railway and Ludwigsbahn, and clear that we ought to have first battle in the last days before the French reinforcements come up. We can fight them when we have five army corps, i. e. 16th day.

32. BEGINNING OF OPERATIONS ON 25th JULY.

Only a part of the troops from Belfort and Colmar can be at Strassburg.

1st corps and division Douay, about 35,000.
25th. Drusenheim.
26th. Cross the Rhine.
27th. Oos.
28th. Fight with Baden division.
29th. Ettlingen.

At Germersheim XI corps	30,000
On 27th ready for action.	
28th. Karlsruhe.	
29th. Ettlingen, there to secure the *debouché* of the Baden troops from the mountains. . . .	15,000
Württembergers up from Durlach . . .	20,000
	65,000

On left bank of Rhine.

French.	
25th. Hagenau, Bischweiler	XI corps, V corps Badeners and Württembergers.
26th. Sulz, Selz	Maxau (take away bridge).
27th. Winden, Maxau	Landau, Germersheim, Germersheim.
28th. Landau, Germersheim	Position on Klingbach, 85,000.

Suppose the 5th corps, Failly, brought up from Bitsch.

25th. Bitsch.
26th. Pirmasens.
27th. Annweiler.
28th. Landau.

85,000 Germans against 55,000 French.

All would be safer if the operations don't begin till the 26th.

33. *On 13th day* of mobilization, July 28:

III between Bingen and Kreuznach, advance-guard Kreuznach.
IV Mannheim, advance-guard Dürkheim.
IX 18th division Mainz.
25th division Worms.
XI Landau.

On 14th day of mobilization can be assembled:

At Alzey: III and IX	65,000
At Neustadt or Dürkheim: IV and XI . . .	60,000

or if necessary:

Behind Mainz, III and 18th division	50,000
Gernsheim, 25th division	15,000
Worms, IV	30,000
Mannheim, XI	30,000
Rastatt, Speyer, Badeners and Württembergers .	30,000
	155,000

On 18th day, Aug. 2.

Second and Reserve Army.
- III Kreuznach.
- IX Alzey.
- X and XII Mainz.
- G. Mainz.
- IV Grünstadt (north of Dürkheim).

i. e. in front of Mainz . . .	180,000
V and XI Landau, Germersheim .	60,000
Badeners and Württembergers at Maxau	30,000
	270,000
VIII on Nahe	30,000
	300,000 without Bavarians

VII on the march.

34. The assembly of eleven North German and one South German corps, 380,000, fully ready for operations, beyond the Rhine, will be finished in 21 days (July 16 to Aug. 5).

We can meet an enemy's attack with sufficient force *in the upper Rhine valley* on and after July 29:

on the right bank with

XI, Baden and Württemberg divisions . .		55,000 infantry
	against	45,000 French

on the left bank with

XI and V, part of Baden and Württemberg .		62,000 infantry
	against	45,000 French

In the Palatinate in front of Mainz on and after Aug. 1:

With III, IV, XI, G., IX, XII . .		140,000 infantry
and if VII and V can be brought up . .		200,000 ,,
	against	136,000 French

On the Moselle about Wittlich Aug. 1:

VII	26,000
possibly with VIII	50,000

Consequently if the French in the next few days advance on the left bank through Saarbrücken we must, in order to have the desirable superiority of numbers, direct VIII from Kirchberg towards Kreuznach, which point it can reach on Aug. 2.

If they advance on the right bank of the Rhine VII and VIII can continue their march on Saarlouis, &c.

On Aug. 3 all corps will have all their trains and be therefore ready for operations.

The corps which have received their trains sooner may therefore begin their advance as first line on the 3rd.

35. Beginning of French Offensive, July 25.

1. Palatinate.

Apparently 3rd corps, Bazaine . . . now at Bolchen	26,000	Infantry
Level with 2nd corps, Frossard. . .	19,500	,,
4th corps, Ladmirault, can march only against Trier or into Palatinate in *second line.*		
5th corps, Failly	19,500	,,
First line .	65,000	,,

Six days marches (set out in detail) bringing French 3, 2, and 5 on July 30 to line east and west of Donnersberg–Grünstadt. They

must wait for their second line (Canrobert and Guard), 32,500 infantry, making their total 97,500 infantry (Ladmirault, 20,000, kept busy by VII).

Their attack near Alzey or Marnheim can thus not be delivered before Aug. 1, when we shall have available :

Second Army	130,000	infantry
2 reserve corps	60,000	,,
	190,000	,,
If French move on right bank V also . .	30,000	,,
	220,000	,,
Deduct for cavalry and artillery . . .	44,000	,,
	176,000	,,

2. Rhine valley. Right bank.

Division Douay from Colmar and Belfort can hardly yet be up to Strassburg, bringing MacMahon's strength to 36,000 infantry.

25th. Drusenheim.
26th. Crossing Rhine.
27th. Oos.
28th. Fight with Baden troops.

At Germersheim is XI	30,000	
27th. Quite ready at Germersheim		
28th. at Karlsruhe .		
29th at Ettlingen with Württembergers .	20,000	
to enable Badeners to debouch from hills	15,000	
	65,000	
Deduct for cavalry and artillery . . .	13,000	
	52,000	infantry.

On left bank.

	French	
July 25.	Hagenau, Bischweiler	XI, V, Badeners and Württembergers.
26.	Sulz, Selz	Maxau (take away bridge).
27.	Winden, Maxau	Landau, Germersheim, Germersheim. Position behind Klingbach.
28.	Fight 36,000	against (95,000 men, from which deduct for cavalry and artillery 20,000) 75,000 infantry.

If 5th corps, Failly, be brought up from Saargemünd :
25th. Bitsch.
26th. Pirmasens.

27th. Annweiler.
28th. Landau. In this case 55,000 French against 75,000 Germans.

Improbable as the French Army in the Palatinate is already too weak (and therefore needs Failly's corps).

Day of mobilization for Prussia.	Date (16th mid-day: see No. 30, p. 37).	
1.	July 16	
2.	,, 17	
3.	,, 18	
4.	,, 19	
5.[1]	,, 20	
6.	,, 21	
7.	,, 22	M. decides to detrain II Army on Rhine.
8.	,, 23	
9.	,, 24	5th Dragoons at Kaiserslautern.
10.	,, 25	
11.	,, 26	
12.	,, 27	
13.	,, 28	
14.	,, 29	
15.	,, 30	
16.	,, 31	
17.	Aug. 1	
18.	,, 2	
19.	,, 3	
20.	,, 4	
21.	,, 5	
22.	,, 6	
23.	,, 7	
24.	,, 8	
25.	,, 9	

36. Berlin, July 20.

To Rhenish Dragoon Regiment 5 at Mainz.

Regiment to reach Alzey on 22nd, Winnweiler 23rd, Kaiserslautern 24th, and to watch the Franco-Bavarian frontier in touch, on the right with Rhenish Ulan regiment 7, now at Saarbrücken, on the left with Maj.-Gen. Maillinger's Bavarian brigade, now at Speyer.

On both flanks touch to be kept. Special mission is to guard the Ludwigshafen–Homburg railway against surprise interruptions by small enemy parties. . . . If pressed by superior forces retreat to Mainz.

[1] If French start this day they upset Germans: Bonnal, i. 92. But were the French on the frontier by then?

37. Berlin, July 20.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-COL. V. PESTEL, SAARBRÜCKEN.

Endeavour with a small detachment from Zweibrücken thoroughly to destroy railway line Saargemünd–Hagenau.

38. Berlin, July 20–1.

TELEGRAM TO 1ST HANSEATIC INFANTRY REGIMENT 75, BREMEN.

Send two companies if possible by railway from Bremen to Geestemünde as enemy's ships near.

39. Berlin, July 21. TO THE GOVERNOR OF MAINZ.

Yes. Make permanent bridge at Petersau in addition to or instead of the flying bridge. But not use material of bridge at Worms, which we wish to keep intact as long as possible. Plenty of ships for a bridge of boats. Cost does not matter.

40. Berlin, July 21.

TO THE OFFICER COMMANDING THE THIRD ARMY.

Your troops as follows:

V and XI Prussian corps, now mobilizing, will shortly be moved according to the rail and march tables already sent to corps commands.

V by railway Leipzig–Hof–Mainz to Landau, detraining there from 12th to 18th mobilization day inclusive.

XI by rail partly by Frankfurt a/M.–Mannheim, partly by Fulda–Aschaffenburg–Mainz, partly marching, to line Germersheim–Landau, arriving from 10th to 13th mobilization day. Greater part will be assembled on 10th mobilization day in the evening. Only the Rhenish Dragoon regiment No. 5 reaches Mainz to-day, and will move on 22nd to Alzey, on 23rd to Winnweiler, on 24th to Kaiserslautern in order after that to watch the frontier between a detachment of the VIII corps at Saarbrücken and a Bavarian brigade under Maj.-Gen. Maillinger at Speyer.

That brigade has a battalion (with a Baden squadron) at Winden (railway junction between Landau and Weissenburg) and a pioneer company at Maxau.

The Baden division now almost mobile stood on July 18:

Staff at Karlsruhe.

II battalion 2nd Grenadier regiment and one squadron 1st Dragoon regiment at Hagenbach (Bavarian Palatinate, south of bridge of Maxau); patrols to Lauterbach.

One squadron at Winden (see above); patrols to Weissenburg. One company Maxau.

3rd Dragoon regiment watching Rhine from Maxau to Steinmauern (mouth of Murg).

2nd Dragoon regiment watching Rhine from Steinmauern to Lichtenau.

Off Rastatt 34th Pomeranian Fusilier regiment, a Prussian miner company, 2nd and 3rd Baden Infantry brigades (12 battalions) with fortress artillery and pioneers.

Kehl held by $1\frac{1}{2}$ companies 3rd regiment, 40 gunners, few pioneers, and 20 horses.

Troops not named are in the northern garrisons.

At Heidelberg a reserve hospital with 300 beds.

Arrangements have been made to bar Rhine at Steinmauern; 40 large vessels and 70 open boats ready to be sunk.

Württemberg division will be mobile and ready to be moved by July 26. Destination Karlsruhe. Two squadrons to-day ready to march and for the time placed at the disposal of Baden division.

Of Bavarian troops there will be ready for action at Germersheim and Speyer:

Aug. 1. 2nd, 3rd, and 4th divisions.
,, 2. 1st division.
,, 3. Reserve cavalry of both corps.
,, 7. Reserve artillery of II corps.
,, 8. Trains not complete till this date.

41. Berlin, July 21, 11.30 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING WÜRTTEMBERG FIELD DIVISION, STUTTGART.

The cavalry ready to march at Stuttgart to be placed for the time at the disposal of the Baden division, and to be set in march as soon as possible, if possible by rail.

42. Berlin, July 21, 9.30 p.m. TO LT.-GEN. BEYER, KARLSRUHE.

Yes, you may send for the battalions from Mannheim as there are troops at Hagenbach, Landau, and Speyer.

Assembly of Baden division round Rastatt desirable.

43. Berlin, July 22. REPORT TO THE KING.

The French until yesterday had not yet crossed the frontier, but they may cross at any moment.

If, with 142,000 men, the strength they now have, they take the offensive to-day, our 7th day of mobilization, they can reach the neighbourhood of Kirchheimbolanden, if they advance with determination, on our 13th day of mobilization. At the most they could reach the Rhine on the 15th day, and would there strike on

the III, IV, and IX corps . . .	100,000 men	at Mainz
„ XI corps, Baden, and part of Württemberg division, say . . .	50,000 „	Worms
„ VIII corps	20,000 „	Kreuznach
altogether	170,000	

so that the enemy's movement, even in the case most favourable to them, would come to a standstill.

By the 17th day we should have also

the Guard and X corps at Mainz,
„ V and XII corps at Worms.

Aug. 1. On this day there can debouch simultaneously

through Kreuznach .	30,000
from Mainz . .	130,000
from Worms . .	90,000
altogether	250,000 men.

The VII corps also will be available against the enemy's communications.

It is possible that the French may further postpone their invasion; behind their corps now quite ready are collecting 52,000 more men, and 70,000 reservists will reach their dépôts on July 23, and the troops on July 28. But it is neither certain nor probable that they will wait for all these.

Even if the French do not begin their advance till the ninth day of mobilization (July 24) we could not meet them at Kirchheimbolanden or further forwards with more than the III and IV corps, 60,000 men. We should have combats in retreat.

I therefore most respectfully propose now at once to decide *that the Second Army shall detrain on the Rhine.*

This does not prevent the advance of two divisions as advance-guard on the 12th day (July 27) beyond Mainz, nor, as the situation may turn out, that of the Second Army, marching.

No change is required for the present in the railway and march time tables of the rest of the army.

44. Berlin, July 22.

TELEGRAM TO THE MANAGEMENT OF THE HESSISCHE LUDWIGSBAHN, MAINZ.

It is of military importance to continue the construction of the railway line between Armsheim and Alzey. Desirable that you should push on the work energetically. If necessary the viaduct could be of wood instead of arches.

45. Berlin, July 22.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING I ARMY CORPS, KÖNIGSBERG.

Troops of the army corps which have been entrained towards Görlitz or Dresden to march to Dresden and Riesa, respectively, in order when the lines are free to be entrained for the west front. (Cancelled by No. 53.)

46. Berlin, July 22.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING VI ARMY CORPS, BRESLAU.

Troops of the 11th division to be billeted round Görlitz, of the 12th division and corps artillery round Breslau.

47. Berlin, July 22.

REGULATIONS FOR DETRAINMENT, QUARTERING, AND SECURITY OF THE TROOPS DURING THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ARMY.

1. On line A (III, later X) troops detrain at Bingen.

III sends an advance-guard beyond Kreuznach and takes billets east of the line Bingen–Kreuznach.

As soon as X arrives III to move nearer to Mainz.

2. On line B (IV, later G.) troops detrain at Mannheim.

IV sends advance-guard through Dürkheim which keeps touch with advance-guard of III by means of 5th Dragoons at Kaiserslautern (see No. 36).

Main body of IV billeted about Mannheim.

Army corps then ready to go to Mannheim or to Mainz by either bank, or to support Bavarians at Landau–Germersheim or Badeners and Württembergers at Rastatt.

To be decided later whether G. detrains at Mannheim or Darmstadt.

3. Hessian (25) division to advance only to Worms.

4. Rest of IX (18th division corps artillery and train) and XII, which detrain at Mosbach and Castel, to be billeted near Mainz.

5. Second Army commander to arrange the quarters round Mainz.

48. Berlin, July 23.

To the Officers commanding the First, Second, and Third Armies, Berlin.

All the authorities specified in the *ordre de bataille* are to take up their duties at once. But they are not to give orders to troops until the troops have left the railway.

49. Berlin, July 23.

To all the Officers commanding Armies.

All telegrams to be as short as is consistent with clearness.

Cipher to be used sparingly, and all the originals to be destroyed as soon as deciphered.

50. Berlin, July 23.

To the Officer commanding the Second Army, Berlin.

By the King's orders the following information is sent to you:

Reports of French mobilization and assembly make it seem possible that they may shortly cross the frontier in considerable force between Trier and the Rhine.

Accordingly His Majesty has decided that the troops of XII and X arriving on the line Cöln–Coblenz–Bingen are to begin detraining at Bingen and to be billeted in the direction of Kreuznach and Mainz, pushing an advance-guard beyond Kreuznach.

Similarly IV and G. are to be transported via Frankfurt a/M. only as far as Mannheim and the advance-guard of IV to be pushed on to Dürkheim. The 5th Dragoons at Kaiserslautern to keep up for the present the communication between the advance-guards of III and IV, but to be relieved as soon as possible by another cavalry regiment of the Second Army. The main body of IV to be billeted around Mannheim.

You are to arrange the billeting and supply of the IX and XII corps.

You and your staff will be transported from here to Mainz on July 26 (inquire at this office for the hour).

Any change of your head-quarters thereafter to be reported. IX and XII are ordered to send G.S.O. and officer of intendance to Mainz.

The frontier is being watched:

(*a*) From Trier to Saarbrücken by detachments of VIII, which is moving towards Saarlouis to assemble.

(*b*) From Saarbrücken to the Rhine by Bavarian troops (Maillinger's brigade, head-quarters Speyer).

On 24th 5th Dragoons reach Kaiserslautern to connect (*a*) and (*b*).

On the right bank of the Rhine the Baden division is mobilized south of Karlsruhe with ten Württemberg squadrons. The XI army corps is moving by rail and march to Landau–Germersheim.

Enclosed paper, secret and not to be copied, gives a general view of the movements of the army during the next few days.

Enclosure.

General conspectus of first movements of the whole army.

First Army.

VII, 13th division by rail to Call, July 24 to 27.
march to Trier, July 31 and Aug. 1.
14th division by rail Aachen and Stolberg, July 24 to 26.
march to Trier, Aug. 1 and 2.

VIII marching mostly on right bank of Moselle (the troops from the north crossing at Bernkastel) and can be collected on Aug. 2 at Saarlouis or between July 28 and 31 at Kirchberg.

Second Army.

III, by railway, July 25–8, Bingen.
X ,, July 29–Aug. 5, Bingen.
IX ,, July 26–9, Mannheim.
G. ,, July 30–Aug. 5, Darmstadt or Mannheim.

Third Army.

XI between July 25 and 27, Germersheim and Landau.
V between July 27 and Aug. 3, Landau.
Bavarian I at Speyer } ready to fight by Aug. 3, and to
Bavarian II at Germersheim } march by Aug. 9.
Württemberg division will be collected at Karlsruhe by July 27–8.
Ten squadrons moved to there, July 22.
Baden division now ready north of Rastatt.

Reserve.

IX, 25th division on July 26, Worms.
18th division, July 28–Aug. 2, Mainz.
XII, July 27–Aug. 2, Mainz.

Corps in East of Monarchy.

I, July 27–Aug. 5, to Berlin.
II, July 26–31, Berlin.
VI marching so as to reach on and after July 25–6:
11th division, Görlitz.
12th division, Breslau.

17th and Landwehr divisions.

17th division, July 26 to 28, Hamburg.
G. Landwehr division, July 29–Aug. 3, Hanover.
2nd Landwehr division, July 28–Aug. 1, Bremen.

1 / 3 } Landwehr division, by Aug. 5 echeloned along railway.

Fortress garrisons be complete at war strength :

Saarlouis, now.
Mainz, July 28.
Coblenz, Aug. 1.
Cöln, July 30.

Coast fortresses (those threatened), July 29, 30.

N.B.—On all the railway lines the dates given include the arrival of the first echelons of the ammunition, &c., columns and trains.

51. Berlin, July 23.

To Officer commanding First Army.

Enclosed above paper.

First Army command moves to Coblenz, July 26.

Send here time table of marches of your head-quarters and those of your corps commanders.

52. Berlin, July 23.

To Officer commanding Third Army.

Enclosed paper.

Head-quarters Second Army has been asked as soon as possible to relieve 5th Dragoons by another cavalry regiment. 5th Dragoons then to rejoin its division.

Your head-quarters will be moved to Mannheim July 28.

Any subsequent change of your head-quarters to be reported here.

53. Berlin, July 23.

To Officer commanding I Army Corps, Königsberg.

I army corps to come by rail to Berlin till the lines to the west are clear. For quarters communicate with Governor-General of III and IV army corps districts.

N.B.—II also ordered to Berlin.

54. Berlin, July 23.

To Officer commanding IX Army Corps, Schleswig.

To communicate with head-quarters Second Army (till 26th here, from 28th at Mainz) as to quarters for IX corps, of which

25th (Hessian) division has been ordered to be at Germersheim on July 25 and at Worms July 26.

[XII corps also referred to head-quarters Second Army.]

55. Berlin, July 23.

To Officers commanding G., III, IV, V, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI Wagon-columns.

1. Those that can march to their army corps' chief magazine by Aug. 6 are to set off as soon as ready.

2. Those that cannot reach the magazine by marching will be taken by rail, not before Aug. 1, probably not till Aug. 4 or 5.

3. Report when and by what route your wagon-column will march, or where and when it will be ready to be moved by rail.

4. All wagon-columns must be loaded up, whether they march or go by rail.

56. Berlin, July 24.

Telegram to Head-quarters IV Army Corps, Magdeburg.

First portion of IV will detrain at Mannheim and be billeted there. Railway arrangements made. Inform the troops.

57. Berlin, July 24.

Telegram to Hessian Commandant and Officer commanding Prussian Pioneers at Mannheim.

Bridge over Rhine in any event to be maintained. Its destruction cannot be allowed.

58. Lt.-Col. Wright, commanding 5th Dragoons, telegraphed from Kaiserslautern, July 24, 11 a.m.: 'Regiment arrived. If your Excellency sends no answer in three hours shall start for Landstuhl. To-morrow Homburg, eventually Blieskastel. Am in daily telegraphic connexion with Saarbrücken and Homburg.'

Berlin, July 24, 1.15 p.m.

Telegram to Lt.-Col. Wright, Kaiserslautern.

Yes, go on. But keep touch to your left also.

59. Berlin, July 24.

Telegram to Lt.-Col. Pestel, Saarbrücken.

No important structures to be destroyed in our own land. If you should have to retreat break up the two railways slightly at many points.

60. Berlin, July 25.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-COL. PESTEL, SAARBRÜCKEN.

Telegraph at once number of regiment of prisoners, dead, or deserters. Report on the damage done to railway on 24th and name of expert engaged in it. [Order to be sent to all troops on the frontier.]

61. Berlin, July 25.

TELEGRAM TO VICE-ADMIRAL JACHMANN, WILHELMSHAVEN.

London Embassy telegraphs from Dover :

' French fleet ten ironclads just passed going east.'

62. Lt.-Gen. v. Gersdorff, 22nd division, telegraphed morning of July 26 that he had reached Landau and intended, as he had just received information that the enemy was about to advance on Pirmasens, to collect north-west of Landau all the Prussian troops that had arrived.

Berlin, July 26.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-GEN. V. GERSDORFF, LANDAU.

Your telegram of this morning received. Approve of your intention and recommend attention towards Annweiler.

Baden and Württemberg divisions at Karlsruhe been instructed from here, in case enemy advances only on left bank of Rhine, to move to join Third Army.

Until General Werder arrives, and afterwards till commander of Third Army arrives, senior general present to command. In case of need orders will be sent from here to IV army corps at Mannheim to send troops to support you.

You are to inform Generals Bose (commanding XI) and Bothmer (commanding 4th Bavarian division).

63. Berlin, July 26.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICERS COMMANDING BADEN AND WÜRTTEMBERG DIVISIONS, KARLSRUHE.

(Copy to Head-quarters, Third Army, in Berlin.)

Not unlikely that 60,000 from Bitsch, Strassburg, Colmar, and Belfort may advance by Weissenburg. If large bodies approach the Lauter without the Rhine being crossed Baden division and Württembergers at once to join Third Army by Maxau or Germersheim.

Then bridge of Maxau to be put away in safety. XI to detrain on 25th at Germersheim, V on 27th at Landau. Bavarians will stand at Speyer and Germersheim on Aug. 3.

If the French should advance on the right bank Baden and Württemberg divisions would be supported in good time at Ettlingen.

Telegraph receipt.

64. Lt.-Col. Pestel reported on July 24, at 1.45 p.m., that he had made useless the viaduct between Saargemünd and Bliesbrücken, and was continuing his damage to the lines (see Nos. 37, 60). Moltke replied :

Berlin, July 26, 7.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-COL. PESTEL, SAARBRÜCKEN.

The instructions sent from here are regarded as carried out.

65. Berlin, July 27, 7.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-COL. WRIGHT, HOMBURG, IN PALATINATE.

(In reply to request for instructions.)

Till relieved by other troops continue watching and keep touch both to right and left.

66. Berlin, July 27, 7.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-COL. V. LESCYNSKI, KARLSRUHE.

Approve of having prepared barrage of river at Altripp. Postpone complete execution as water route Mainz–Germersheim is important for us. Take care that barrage at Germersheim, ordered by me[1] to be ready, does not prevent the removal, if needed, of bridge at Maxau.

67. Berlin, July 27.

TO ALL OFFICERS COMMANDING ARMIES.

Field states every ten days.

Lists of casualties after every engagement.

68. Berlin, July 28.

TO ALL OFFICERS COMMANDING ARMIES AND ARMY CORPS.

Military officials, officers of intendance, and contractors not to travel by troop trains.

[1] No. 28.

69. Berlin, July 18.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING VIII ARMY CORPS, CÖLN.

Order troops to telegraph to me all reports about the enemy, especially encounters with him, and to send if possible the numbers of the enemy's regiments.

70. Berlin, July 28.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-GEN. v. STOSCH, MAINZ.

Desirable to push forward supplies, at once to line Kreuznach–Alzey–Worms. Very large magazine Alzey, other points Gaubickelsheim and Monsheim. Ovens to be set up at Neunkirchen, Homburg, Saarlouis. Pioneers can help the bakers. May requisition at Bingerbrück Capt. Mantey, and at Mannheim Capt. Huene. But no disturbance of the large transports of troops. I corps will come up on lines A and C, VI on E and D, from Aug. 3 on. II corps not yet decided. More by letter.

71. Berlin, July 28. MEMOIR.

On July 30 will be ready for action and for marching :

First Army.

VII on the march towards Trier ; main forces one or two marches from Trier.

VIII on march towards Saarlouis ; main forces level with Morbach (15 kilometres south of Bernkastel).

3rd cavalry division partly pushed on to watch the frontier, partly marching up with the army corps.

Second Army and Reserve.

III (exclusive of corps artillery) east of line Bingen–Kreuznach.

IV *à cheval* of the road Mannheim–Dürkheim.

IX (excluding corps artillery) between Mainz and Worms.

5th and 6th cavalry divisions (including regiments of X army corps) in the *rayons* of III and IV.

G., X, and XII are coming up on four railway lines to the line Bingen–Mainz–Mannheim.

In order to have room for these three corps and to facilitate supply it is desirable to push on III and IV to the line Alsenz–Göllheim–Grünstadt with their masses and their advance-guards to the line Lauterecken–Kaiserslautern. The cavalry divisions, forming as they march forward, should be pushed still nearer to the frontier. Head-quarters Second Army, Alzey.

As the Second Army is kept hanging back it seems necessary to keep the First Army on the line Trier–Wadern and not push it on isolated to the frontier, which can be watched as before merely by advanced troops and 3rd cavalry division.

No change needed at present in the dispositions made for the Third Army.

Necessary to clear up the situation which would be created if the French Army crossed the frontier to-day in force.

The determining situation would be that of the Second Army and of the Reserve in the centre. If both of these remain or assemble on the line Alsenz–Göllheim–Grünstadt, which even with extraordinary marching cannot be attacked before August 5, there will by that day be assembled

G.	29,000	infantry
III	25,000	,,
IV	25,000	,,
X.	25,000	,,
IX	23,000	,,
XII	29,000	,,
I.	25,000	,,
Half VI	13,000	,,
	194,000	,,

in a position favourable for falling upon the heads of the enemy's columns as they debouch from the hill country.

At this place the enemy could not have more than

3rd	army corps,	Bazaine	36,000	infantry
2nd	,,	Frossard	27,000	,,
5th	,,	Failly	27,000	,,
G.	,,	Bourbaki	18,000	,,
Res.	,,	Canrobert	25,000	,,
			133,000	,,

On his wings the enemy might employ:

Right wing, First Army Corps, MacMahon	44,000	infantry

against which to-day the Third Army has

XI	25,000	infantry
Half V	13,000	,,
Baden division	12,000	,,
Württemberg division	15,000	,,
One Bavarian division	12,000	,,
	77,000	,,

to these will be added by August 5

Half V	12,000	infantry
3 Bavarian divisions	36,000	,,
	48,000	,,

Altogether, Third Army: 125,000 infantry.

On his left wing the enemy would then have only

4th corps, Ladmirault . . 27,000 infantry

against which the First Army has 50,000.

Thus on August 5,

First Army.	Second Army & Reserve.	Third Army.
55,000 infantry against 27,000.	194,000 infantry against 135,000.	125,000 infantry against 44,000.

72. Berlin, July 29.

TELEGRAM TO GENERAL STEINMETZ, COBLENZ.

King orders First Army not for the present to pass the line Saarburg–Wadern with its main forces. Trier to be held if attacked.

73. Berlin, July 29.

TELEGRAM TO PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES, MAINZ.

King orders Second Army to push forward its billets to the line Alsenz–Göllheim–Grünstadt. Advance-guards further forward. 5th and 6th cavalry divisions to be formed.

74. Berlin, July 29.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING, FIRST ARMY, COBLENZ.

The King will leave Berlin on 31st at 6 p.m. and will proceed by

Magdeburg	July 31, 8.30 p.m.
Brunswick	Aug. 1, 3 a.m.
Hanover	6 a.m.
Hamm	3 p.m.
Cöln	10.30 p.m.
Coblenz	Aug. 2, 3 a.m.
to Mainz	Aug. 2, 7 a.m.

Telegrams to above stations.

Enclosed notes on strength, formation, and positions of French.

Second Army has been ordered to advance its quarters to the line Alsenz–Göllheim–Grünstadt. The I and VI army corps are to come by August 5 by Bingen–Mainz–Mannheim into the district south of Mainz.

Head-quarters of Second Army to-morrow, Alzey.

Enclosure.

Digest of trustworthy information received on 27th to 29th July about formation and positions of French Army.

1st Corps, MacMahon. Chief of Staff, Gen. Colson.

Two divisions at Strassburg.

Two divisions bivouacked along the railway to Brumath. This corps is said to have 19 batteries : 12 divisional batteries, 1 heavy-artillery battery for the Cavalry division, 4 12-pounder batteries, and 2 4-pounder batteries as corps artillery.

Strassburg fully armed ; mitrailleuses and field carriages used for the purpose.

2nd Corps, Frossard. Chief of Staff, Gen. Saget.

Head-quarters, St.-Avold.

Division Bataille at Forbach opposite our outposts.

Reported that entrenchments are being thrown up at Morsbach (S.W. Forbach).

3rd Corps, Bazaine. Chief of Staff, Gen. Manique.

The advance of this corps on the 22nd from Metz to Bolchen is confirmed.

4th Corps, Ladmirault. Chief of Staff, Gen. Desaint de Marthille.

Said to be now concentrated at Thionville.

Advance guard at Sierck apparently consists of 20 chasseurs, 13th, 33rd, 11th regiments chasseurs *à cheval.*

Two of the divisions commanded by Generals de Cissey and Pajol.

5th Corps, de Failly. Chief of Staff, Gen. Besson.

Head-quarters, Bitsch.

Said to be a corps of four divisions. Not known for certain.

6th Corps, Canrobert. Chief of Staff, Gen. Henry.

Said to be still at Châlons.

Details of its composition not known.

7th Corps, Douay. Chief of Staff, Gen. Renson.

Head-quarters, Belfort.

Said to be still in course of formation.

Repeatedly said to consist of three cavalry divisions and one infantry division.

Cavalry divisions commanded by Generals Barail, de Bonnemains, and de Forton.

Guard, Bourbaki. Chief of Staff, Gen. d'Auvergne.

At Nancy.

Emperor Napoleon went to join the army yesterday. His head-quarters, Nancy.

The army in Alsace-Lorraine is called *Armée du Rhin.*

Other corps are spoken of, viz. expeditionary corps for the sea under General Palikao, and the reserve forming at the camp of Châlons.

Encounters between the advanced troops of the two sides been more lively since July 27. No definite signs of offensive intentions on the part of the French.

A telegram of to-day (29th) from Florence announced the impending embarkation for France of the troops at Civita Vecchia. These are :

Infantry brigade, Guilhan,
6th battalion chasseurs,
35th regiment,
42nd ,,
2 squadrons 7th chasseurs *à cheval,*
2 batteries 14th regiment artillery,
1 company sappers.

The whole under the command of Gen. Dumont.

75. Berlin, July 29.

To Officer commanding Second Army, Alzey.

Announces King's movements as in No. 74.

Inform you that First Army has been ordered not to pass the line Saarburg–Wadern.

I and II will arrive by rail through Bingen, Mainz, and Mannheim by August 5 in the region south of Mainz. Desired that the districts now occupied by IX and XII should be evacuated as soon as possible.

No change as to Third Army.

76. Berlin, July 29.

To Officer commanding Third Army, Speyer.

Announces King's journey as in No. 74, and adds substance of No. 75.

77. Berlin, July 29. To Lt.-Gen. Stosch, Mainz.

Announces King's journey as in No. 74, and adds substance of No. 75.

On 19th day of mobilization, August 3, a number of supply trains will arrive at Mosbach and Castel, which must be unloaded with all speed so that the stations may be cleared and the trains may return.

On July 30, at 1.30 p.m., came a telegram from Gen. v. Goeben,

commanding VIII army corps, to say that the force at Saarbrücken had repulsed an attack by large forces but was in great danger from the enemy's superior numbers. Was there any prospect of its reinforcement by the Second Army ?

Moltke at once replied by

78. Berlin, July 30, 2 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO GEN. V. GOEBEN, COBLENZ.

Little band at Saarbrücken must not be sacrificed.

Support by Second Army at present impossible. No objection to support by detachment from Wadern posted at Sulzbach or Neunkirchen for it to fall back upon. Not desirable now to damage railway.

In the evening this was supplemented by

79. Berlin, July 30, 7.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-COL. PESTEL, SAARBRÜCKEN.

In view of enemy's great superiority infantry to march off as soon as possible, say to Sulzbach–Bildstock. Cavalry keep touch with the enemy. Report receipt of this.

The same evening was sent the order for the Second Army to form up.

80. Berlin, July 30, 2.15 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES, ALZEY.

His Majesty has ordered that the 5th and 6th cavalry divisions shall at once be pushed forward to reconnoitre towards the frontier Saarbrücken–Bitsch.

IX and XII till further orders entirely under your command and been so informed.

IX is at once to move forward level with III and IV ; the other corps to join up to them as soon as possible.

Col. v. Gottberg, Q.M.G. of Third Army, had reported that French troops were moving in the direction from Bitsch by Weissenburg towards the Bienwald, whereupon :

81. Berlin, July 30, morning.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-GEN. V. BLUMENTHAL, SPEYER.

Second Army is concentrating in front of Alzey, IV at Grünstadt. Telegram from Col. Gottberg of yesterday evening received.

According to that the French intend to unite their 5th and 1st corps on the lower Lauter.

But report from Zweibrücken of yesterday evening says there are still strong parties at Breidenbach–Bitsch.

It seems to me desirable to bring the Württembergers and Badeners over to the left bank while the bridge at Maxau can still be used. No danger for right bank as soon as the Third Army takes the offensive in the direction Hagenau–Bischweiler. Will propose to the King to authorize this and at once let you know the decision.

This is not an order, but should first of all be submitted for the consideration of the Crown Prince.

Reply as soon as possible.

Blumenthal acknowledged receipt at 5 p.m. and reported that the enemy was said to have collected much bridging material south of Lauterburg, whereupon Moltke replied:

82. Berlin, July 30, 7.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY, SPEYER.

His Majesty thinks it fitting that the Third Army, as soon as the Baden and Württemberg divisions have joined, should at once advance southwards on the left bank of the Rhine, seek the enemy, and attack him.

By this means bridge-building south of Lauterburg will be prevented and all South Germany most effectually protected.

On the morning of July 31 the Crown Prince replied that the advance could not take place for the moment as not all parts of the Third Army were ready to march. Moltke then sent:

83. Berlin, July 31, 12.20 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY, SPEYER.

When is Third Army expected to be ready for operations?

Blumenthal at once replied: On Aug. 3.

84. Berlin, July 31, 10.30 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICERS COMMANDING FIRST AND THIRD ARMIES, COBLENZ AND SPEYER.

III, IV, and IX corps will be on Aug. 3 morning in front of Alzey; G., X, XII closed up behind them; 5th and 6th cavalry divisions, followed by a division of III and a division of IV, will advance to-day and can reach the frontier Aug. 3.

Added to Third Army only:

Post at Saarbrücken maintained so far.

85. Berlin, July 31.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, COBLENZ.

His Majesty orders First Army to concentrate on line Wadern–Losheim. Observation towards Saar to be continued.

86. Berlin, July 31, 2 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-GEN. v. STOSCH, MAINZ.

Magazines at Birkenfeld, Kusel, and Kaiserslautern desirable. Advance expected soon.

87. Magdeburg, July 31, 9.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY, ALZEY.

From Aug. 2 on detrainment at Kaiserslautern and Birkenfeld. Line commission have instructions. Please inform III, X, and G.

88. Undated, end of July. DRAFT MARCH TABLE (see p. 61).

89. H.Q. Mainz, Aug. 2.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY, ALZEY.

By His Majesty's order the I army corps is for the time under your command for quarters and supply. Five battalions of I will arrive Aug. 3 at Birkenfeld; the rest of the 1st infantry division, and the three cavalry regiments of I destined for 1st cavalry division, and some wagon-columns will follow in the subsequent days.

The other half of I will detrain from eighteen trains a day at Kaiserslautern beginning Aug. 4 early.

90. H.Q. Mainz, Aug. 2.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY, SPEYER.

By His Majesty's order the VI army corps is for the time under you for quarters and supplies. VI will detrain at Landau twelve trains a day from Aug. 4 early, except the cavalry regiments which are given in the *ordre de bataille* to the 2nd cavalry division.

91. H.Q. Mainz, Aug. 2, 11 a.m.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY, ALZEY.

In consequence of the telegram from you of yesterday the matter has been placed before the King, who has ordered:

Unless the enemy begins his advance in force to-day IV is to be pushed with its main body to Landstuhl, but no further.

But, in case of a determined advance of enemy troops from Saarbrücken and Saargemünd, III must not to-morrow continue

DRAFT MARCH TABLE.

Left Wing. Dates.	*Third Army.*				*Second Army and Reserve.*						*First Army. Left Wing.*	
			Bavarians.									
	XI and Badeners 42,000	V and Württembergers 42,000	II	I	IV	IX	III	X	I	VI	VIII	VII
	84,000		57,000 ?		130,000							
August 2	Germersheim and Karlsruhe	Landau Germersheim	Germersheim	Speyer	Mannheim	Göllheim	Alzey	Kreuznach				
Start on August 3	Langenkandel and Maxau	Weissenburg	Landau	Neustadt	Dürkheim	Winnweiler	Alsenz	Sobernheim			May reach Saarlouis	Rehlingen
4	Sulz	Sulz	Annweiler	Elmstein	Frankenstein	Wolfstein	Lautereecken	Oberstein				
5	Hagenau	Reichshofen	Pirmasens	Waldfischbach	Kaiserslautern	Kusel	Baumholder	Türkismühle	Kaiserslautern	Landau or Mussbach		
6	Pfaffenhofen	Ingweiler	Neu-Hornbach	Zweibrücken	Bruchmühlbach	Ottweiler	St.-Wendel	Tholey				
7	Lützelstein	Puberg	Rohrbach	Reinheim east of Saargemünd	Blieskastel	Sulzbach	Landsweiler	Lebach				
8	Finstingen	Saarunion	According to circumstances		Saargemünd	Saarbrücken	Völklingen	Saarlouis			Saarlouis	Rehlingen

Guard and XII follow one march in rear.

its march to Baumholder and IV must remain with its main body at Kaiserslautern. The further detrainments at Birkenfeld and Kaiserslautern will then apparently be sufficiently protected. As for Birkenfeld the presence of the First Army at Wadern gives further security. A further forward movement of the two named corps can follow without objection when the other corps of the Second Army have closed up to within half a march.

In order to obtain His Majesty's decision as to the further advance of the army it is necessary to know the advance ordered by you for IX, G., XII, and X.

The other difficulties raised in conversation concerning supply will be completely removed: as to them I refer to a letter from Lt.-Gen. v. Stosch which accompanies this.

The detraining of three ammunition columns of III at Bingen (due to bringing up three full provision trains to Birkenfeld) cannot cause a lack of ammunition in III as IX and XII have their ammunition columns.

As the King has temporarily attached I (arriving from and after to-morrow on line A and from day after to-morrow on line C) to Second Army for quarters and supply, the arrangements must be so made that this corps can be united in the right wing. The 1st cavalry division has been given to the First Army by the King's order to-day.

92. H.Q. Mainz, Aug. 2, 9 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY, ALZEY.

Third Army concentrates to-day in bivouacs north of Klingbach. According to report from Zweibrücken enemy crossed frontier at Saarbrücken this afternoon. Telegraphic reports suggest that at the same time our post at Saarbrücken was driven away.

Necessary for Second Army to close up soon.

93. H.Q. Mainz, Aug. 2. TO BAVARIAN MINISTER OF WAR.

(Same to Württemberg and Baden ministers of war; copy to Third Army at Speyer.)

Troops to guard *Etappen* will soon be wanted. They may in the first instance be taken from the garrisons of fortresses not threatened.

Desirable to attach to General Inspector of *Etappen* a few persons familiar with the home conditions.

Third Army been asked to communicate directly with you on this subject. Prussia has told off 8 battalions and 4 squadrons to Third Army for *Etappen* service.

PART III

THE ACTUAL WAR

I. From August 3 to September 2, 1870.

94. H.Q. Mainz, Aug. 3, 11 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO GEN. V. STEINMETZ, LOSHEIM.

Delayed advance of French allows the hope that the Second Army can be concentrated on Aug. 6 in front of the forest zone of Kaiserslautern.

If a quick advance of the enemy cannot be prevented the Second Army will, in that alternative, have to concentrate behind the Lauter. Co-operation of both armies in the battle intended. First army from St.-Wendel or in the alternative from Baumholder.

His Majesty orders the First Army to concentrate on Aug. 4 towards Tholey.

Third Army will cross the border at Weissenburg to-morrow. General offensive intended.

95. H.Q. Mainz, Aug. 3, 11 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES.

Delayed advance of French allows hope that Second Army can be concentrated on Aug. 6 in front of forest zone of Kaiserslautern.

First Army will be brought on to-morrow to Tholey. Co-operation of both armies in battle.

If swift advance of French cannot be prevented, in that event concentration of Second Army behind Lauter. First Army to Baumholder.

Third Army will cross the border at Weissenburg to-morrow. General offensive intended.

96. Mainz, Aug. 3, noon.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, LOSHEIM.

One cavalry division, by King's order, will be assigned to First Army. Will reach Birkenfeld from Aug. 5, noon, to (including) Aug. 8. Staff probably Aug. 7.

97. Mainz, Aug. 3, noon.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY, SPEYER.

Two cavalry divisions, by King's order, assigned to Third Army. Staff reaches Castel on Rhine Aug. 4; the regiments of VI arrive there from Aug. 3rd to 6th; the regiments of I and II at Bingen on Aug. 5, 7, or 8.

On Aug. 3, at noon, only vague reports of the engagement at Saarbrücken of Aug. 2 had reached general head-quarters. This caused Moltke to send:

98. Mainz, Aug. 3.

TELEGRAM TO COMMANDANT, SAARLOUIS.

What happened yesterday at Saarbrücken?
Here only rumours, no official report.

At 5 p.m. came a telegram sent at 11.20 a.m. from Lebach, 2.28 p.m. from Saarlouis, from Gen. v. Goeben with full report on the action at Saarbrücken, and caused Moltke to send:

99. Mainz, Aug. 3.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING VIII ARMY CORPS, LEBACH, VIA SAARLOUIS.

Possession of Saarbrücken at present of no importance to us.
First Army has orders to concentrate at Tholey. VIII to move accordingly.

100. Mainz, Aug. 4, midnight.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY, WINNWEILER.

Your army order of Aug. 4 (brought here by Gen. v. Stosch) exactly fulfils the King's intentions.

I note the following for your information on the situation:

The First Army is concentrating to-day in the triangle Tholey–Lebach–Ottweiler (head-quarters Tholey, communication by St.-Wendel), and will stay there for the present.

Not yet decided whether I is permanently to belong to First or Second Army. It will therefore be advisable to direct the troops of I, say, to the area Tholey–Turkismühle–St.-Wendel, and to keep the head-quarters First Army informed of the position of head-quarters I.

The Third Army is to-day taking the offensive, at first towards the south. If on reaching Hagenau it has not met strong enemy

forces it will turn towards the Saar above Saargemünd, duly covering its left wing.

In that case it is proposed that VI, which detrains at Landau, should march on Pirmasens so as to connect Second and Third Armies.

But the Third Army cannot reach the upper Saar before the 9th, and therefore it is not necessary for the Second Army to reach that river with its main body before then.

The enclosed sketch gives what is here known up to now of the enemy's strength and position. The advance of the Third Army will bring sure information of the whereabouts of MacMahon's and Failly's corps. The enemy seems at present to intend to keep to mere defence on the Saar. In view of this, and unless the enemy crosses the Saar in force to-day and moves towards Kaiserslautern, it is for you to consider whether the heads of III and IV should not at once move forward to the line Ottweiler–Neunkirchen–Homburg, then to halt and await the arrival of the rear echelons, in order to pass as soon as possible beyond the ground that hinders the deployment of large forces.

I note, lastly, that His Majesty has to-day ordered up II also, which will detrain its two infantry divisions on Aug. 9 and 10 at Neunkirchen and Homburg.

The 3rd Landwehr division (at the disposal of the Second Army for *Etappen*), which has been sent on from here in the first instance to Homburg, where it will arrive Aug. 7 and 8, may be detrained wholly or partly as you may determine (and should inform the railway committee and these head-quarters), at points further in rear, and at the same time in each case two of the companies sent off by steamer to-day from here by the Governor of Mainz to Bingen and Worms should be relieved.

On and after Aug. 6 a ferry at Rosengarten–Worms will be so far ready that laden wagons coming from Darmstadt can cross it *en route* for Alzey.

In order permanently to make sure of supplies a few trains daily on lines *A* and *C* will be at the disposal of the administration. These lines will be handed over entirely to the General Inspector of *Etappen* of the Second Army when the transport of II is ended, i. e. about Aug. 11 (last train arrives). You can dispose of line *B* on and after Aug. 10.

Enclosure.

Sketch of position of French Army on Aug. 3, 1870, according to reports received.

Of sixth corps no fresh information, except that 47th Regiment was said to be still at Châlons on July 29.

According to latest reports the embarkation of an expeditionary corps has been abandoned.

It is doubtful whether the 1st corps has not marched off through Zabern.

Nothing has been heard during the last few days of the 7th corps reported to be assembling on the upper Rhine.

101. Mainz, Aug. 4, noon.

To Lt.-Gen. v. Blumenthal, Landau.

The intentions explained in your letter of yesterday quite correspond to the views and intentions of these head-quarters.

The Third Army is left quite free in the execution of its mission. Direct co-operation with the Second Army is at present impossible

owing to the Hardt mountains. Only from here can the accord of the operations of both armies, with due regard to the enemy's measures, be secured.

Most desirable that Third Army should as soon as possible come upon the corps of MacMahon or of Failly. It must become clear at Hagenau, if not before, whether they have been brought up to the line St.-Avold–Saargemünd.

In that case an advance further to the south would be a blow in the air, and a march to the right, to the upper Saar, would be necessary.

The Second Army will to-day reach the following points :

III Baumholder–Kusel, advance-guard towards St.-Wendel.
IV Landstahl, advance-guard towards Homburg.
5th and 6th cavalry divisions pushed on near to the frontier.

These two army corps must for the present remain halted till the others can come close up. These others to-day will reach :

X, Meisenheim.
IX, Winnweiler (Head-quarters, Prince Frederick Charles).
G., Otterberg–Kaiserslautern.
XII, Göllheim.

The First Army will be to-day in the triangle Tholey–Lebach–Ottweiler.

By Aug. 7 the First and Second Armies will probably come into direct connexion with each other on the line Ottweiler–Zweibrücken.

The enemy's army, of which the situation so far as known is given in detail in the enclosure, has so far maintained a passive attitude.

On Aug. 2 three of Frossard's divisions dislodged our post from Saarbrücken, but the enemy has not yet occupied the railway station at St.-Johann. So the intention seems to be, after interrupting railways and laying out entrenchments, to keep on the defensive with all available forces in a fortified position behind the Saar.

In that case the Second Army's frontal attack will receive material support from the advance of the Third Army, which, in order to use as many roads as possible, must be executed on as broad a front as the nearness of the enemy allows.

The assignment of the VI corps to one or the other army has not yet been determined, but for the present it is at the disposal of the Third Army. On the road towards Pirmasens during the advance towards the west it would furnish a desirable link between the

Third and Second Armies and prevent a possible penetration of the enemy from Bitsch between them.

The goal we aim at is the simultaneous entrance of all three armies into the decisive battle, and we shall try from here to regulate the movements to that end.

Both the Baden and Württemberg divisions some time ago expressed the wish to be united with a Prussian corps and not to be joined together in one corps. The Crown Prince, however, is quite free to arrange this as he thinks suitable for the time.

After the heavy transport of VI is ended on Aug. 9 the *Etappen* troops at the disposal of the Third Army (8 battalions, 4 squadrons) will reach Landau. You are requested to arrange their further transport (also by rail if you wish), noting that on and after Aug. 9 both lines *D* and *E* in their whole extent will be at the disposal of the Third Army's Inspector-General of *Etappen*.

102. Mainz, Aug. 4, noon.

TELEGRAM TO GEN. V. STEINMETZ, THOLEY.

Agree with position [1] taken. Remain there till further orders.

103. Mainz, Aug. 4, noon.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, THOLEY.

Supplementing my telegram (No. 102):

The Third Army will take the offensive to-day in the direction of Hagenau and eventually afterwards towards the upper Saar; the Second Army will continue its march towards the line Neunkirchen–Homburg; the First Army will receive further orders either to support the Second or to advance against the left flank of the enemy's army. The passage of the Saar, behind which the enemy seems to mean to maintain his defensive attitude, is not contemplated before Aug. 9.

The I army corps, which is still detraining at Birkenfeld and Kaiserslautern, will be so posted by the Second Army that it can be placed under either the First or the Second Army for further operations. The decision on this point is reserved.

The enclosed sketch (p. 66) shows the details of the enemy's position as far as known here until now.

Line *F* is entirely at the disposal of the Inspector-General of *Etappen* of the First Army.

[1] In the triangle Tholey–Lebach–Ottweiler.

On Aug. 4 at 8 p.m., the following telegram from Gen. v. Steinmetz was received at general head-quarters:

H.Q., St.-Wendel, Aug. 4, 3 p.m.

By the King's orders I have to-day marched with the First Army to the neighbourhood of Tholey, but should have preferred to remain in the position on the Saar, because it formed an offensive flank against the line of march of the Second Army, and because from there the First Army could act with more effect than in a position at St.-Wendel or even Baumholder, where the First Army is merely a prolongation of the front of the Second. Therefore do not understand the strategic idea of giving up position on the Saar, for which no grounds in military situation; explanation desired in order to be able to play my part correctly in future. If Crown Prince on 6th at Weissenburg, this and advance of Second and Third Army on Nancy or Lunéville would have compelled the enemy, distributed along long line, to leave the Saar and have given First Army opportunity of successful intervention. I am afraid the French will see in our new position an advantage won by them.

Moltke replied the same evening:

104. Mainz, Aug. 4, 8.45 p.m.

Telegram to Gen. v. Steinmetz, Tholey.

Desired motives for measures ordered by King explained in letter now *en route*. Note Crown Prince at Weissenburg not on 6th, but on 4th.

The letter *en route* means No. 103. Moltke also sent off at noon on 5th the following:

105. Mainz, Aug. 5, 6 a.m.[1]

To General v. Steinmetz, Tholey.

I quite agree with Your Excellency as to the importance of the army commanders having an insight into the motives underlying the King's orders issued to them. I therefore have the honour of answering more fully in writing than was possible in a telegram your kind inquiry of the 4th inst.

As was already explained at Berlin—I think to Your Excellency in person, but certainly to your Chief of Staff and Quartermaster General—the mission of the First Army, apart from protecting the Rhine province in the first instance, is considered to be to take a most decisive part against the enemy's left flank in the battle.

[1] Delivered Aug. 6, 2.30 a.m. (see p. 72.)

This action of course cannot be taken in isolation, but only in connexion with the Second Army.

The place where it can come in depends not only on the Second Army but also on the enemy's movements.

On the day when the order for concentration at Wadern was given the Second Army was so far back that a collision in front of Kaiserslautern seemed possible, even probable. The possibility had therefore to be kept open of bringing the First Army up to Baumholder for the battle.

It is still possible to-day that the collision may take place on the line Ottweiler–Homburg. In that event the First Army at Tholey is in the right place.

Not till the Second Army has approached the Saar will it be time to push the First Army on across that river.

An isolated advance against the enemy, who seems to have all his forces concentrated, could lead only to disaster.

The co-operation of all three armies can be directed only by His Majesty, but in the execution of the orders issued to that end the entire freedom of the army commanders to act according to circumstances will not be limited.

Meanwhile Gen. v. Steinmetz had appealed to the King in the following telegram :

H.Q., St.-Wendel, Aug. 5, 1.30 a.m.

General Moltke has let me know that a general offensive is intended, and in the same telegram by Your Majesty's command has ordered the concentration of the First Army at Tholey. To-day he informs me that the First Army is to remain till further orders in the position it has taken up, Tholey–Ottweiler–Lebach. But the Second Army informs me that on the 6th it will move to the line Neunkirchen–Zweibrücken. In that way the Second Army pushes itself before the First, and as I have received no directions for the further advance I have no guidance for rightly coming into action.[1]

Moltke felt the need for giving further explanations of the intentions on which his arrangements were based to the commanders of the First and Second Armies.

106. Mainz, Aug. 5, 12.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, THOLEY.

Road St.-Wendel–Ottweiler–Neunkirchen must be left clear by First Army to-morrow.

[1] King's marginal note : ' Flank position was intended.'

I army corps definitely placed under First Army and begins to detrain at Neunkirchen via Homburg. Letter follows. Inspector-General of *Etappen* and railway division begin detraining at Birkenfeld to-morrow morning.

107. Mainz, Aug. 5, 12 noon.

To Officer commanding First Army, Tholey.

In reply to your cipher telegram to the King you are hereby informed that, although the leading corps of the Second Army will reach the line Neunkirchen–Zweibrücken on the 6th inst., the deployment of this army will not be completed until the 7th inst., and the troops, if possible, must have a rest-day on the 8th inst. after their harassing marches.

In these circumstances it is appropriate for the First Army to remain to-day and to-morrow substantially in its present position, and merely to clear off entirely from the road St.-Wendel–Ottweiler–Neunkirchen, which is indispensable for the movement of the Second Army.

On the 7th inst. the First Army, to which by the King's command the I corps (head-quarters Birkenfeld) is to belong, would have to approach the Saar, attracting as little notice as possible, by the roads Lebach–Saarlouis and Illingen–Völklingen, so far as to be ready from the 9th inst. to cross the Saar in the portion between Saarlouis and Völklingen, and to be led to the offensive against the enemy's left flank, while the Second Army advances to the front.

His Majesty expressly reserves the order for the execution of an operation of this kind, as its beginning and direction depend on how the conditions at the Third Army shape themselves at the time.

108. Mainz, Aug. 5, 12.20 p.m.

Telegram to Officer commanding Second Army, Kaiserslautern.

Road St.-Wendel–Ottweiler–Neunkirchen will be left clear by First Army.

Inspector-General of *Etappen* and field railway division will detrain to-morrow at Birkenfeld; provision column of III corps left behind will detrain in the following night. Advance of strong cavalry across the line Saargemünd–Bitsch desired.

Prussian railways to be kept intact.

109. Mainz, Aug. 5, 12 noon.

To Officer commanding Second Army, Kaiserslautern.

King has ordered that I is to belong to First Army, VI to Third Army, and II to Second Army. II will be detrained, say, at Neunkirchen and Homburg between the 8th and 11th inst. Also in order to facilitate the concentration of I it has been arranged that from this afternoon on the trains of this corps as they arrive shall go on through Homburg to Neunkirchen and the troops detrain there.

Officer Commanding First Army has been instructed at once to clear off the road St.-Wendel–Ottweiler–Neunkirchen and to echelon the army on the roads Wadern–Lebach–Saarlouis and Illingen–Völklingen. The First Army will then be ready to support the operations of the Second Army in the sense earlier intended, especially by working against the enemy's left flank.

Unless the development of affairs with the Third Army requires otherwise the further advance against the Saar from the position contemplated by you will not take place before the 9th inst., so that on the 8th the greater part of the Second Army can have a rest-day, which it will need.

His Majesty expects to transfer his head-quarters from here to Homburg on the 7th.

General v. Steinmetz was not satisfied with the explanations given him on the part of head-quarters, and on Aug. 6 sent to Moltke a fresh justification of his view of the mission of the First Army. It was as follows :

H.Q. Hellenhausen, Aug. 6, 1870.

Your Excellency's letter of Aug. 5 reached me to-day, Aug. 6, at 2.30 a.m.

With reference to its contents I have the honour of replying that as regards the mission of the First Army I had no doubt so long as the Second Army was trying to effect its strategical deployment towards the Saar. It could consist only in facilitating the advance of the Second Army by drawing the enemy's troops away from that army and on to itself, and, if the advance of the Second Army was no longer possible without fighting, to take an effectual part in the fight.[1] In this sense was conceived the great reconnaissance, which was not carried out owing to the superior order to march off to Tholey, and to this mission the position of the First Army behind the Saar—from Saarbrücken to Saarlouis—corresponded, whereas

[1] Moltke's note : 'Would have exposed First Army to defeat.'

the withdrawal of the First Army to Tholey, or in the alternative to Baumholder, gave back to the enemy behind the Saar his full freedom of action to impede the advance of the Second Army.

The enemy has made no other use of it than to entrench himself in his position Saarbrücken–Forbach, and seems to mean to let himself be attacked in that position. Whether and how we are to do as he wishes is now the question.

The troops of the First and Second Army now stand literally arm in arm; they must, if the Second Army had kept the direction hitherto followed in its march, have been mixed up; in any case the First Army is cramped in its freedom of operation. Therefore, and also because the deployment of the VII and VIII army corps required regulation, I have been the less able to confine myself to clearing off the road St.-Wendel–Ottweiler–Neunkirchen because the troops that had to be transferred from here towards the west[1] would have come upon places already filled with other troops; accordingly there has had to be on the whole a transference of the quarters towards the west but also towards the south, as space had to be gained at Tholey for quarters for the I corps meanwhile placed under my command and also for the 1st Cavalry division also assigned to me.

The First Army, which hitherto had about two marches to make from Tholey to the Saar, has now, in the position already reported by telegraph, approached to within one march from the Saar and—if it comes to an attack by the First and Second Armies together upon the enemy behind the Saar—has recovered the necessary freedom of movement and the equally necessary room for the deployment of its troops.[2]

For the further operations, after the enemy has been thrown back from the Saar, it is necessary for me to know what direction the operations of the Second Army will take. I presume that this will be towards Nancy, so that the First Army may not be squeezed against the fortresses on the Moselle.[3]

Whether His Majesty would order this or something else was the chief reason for my suggestion that I should be furnished with the directives for the operations, and I here again renew the request as the timely arrangement of my measures depends on my timely knowledge of His Majesty's intentions.

[1] Moltke's note: '? ?'

[2] 'Instead of outflanking the enemy its advance from Saarbrücken–Völklingen will be outflanked from Bolchen (Boulay).'

[3] Moltke's note: 'When we are close to the enemy operations cannot be given out long in advance.'

110. Mainz, Aug. 6. To the Minister of War, Mainz.

(Copies to Officer commanding 2nd Army, and Governors of Mainz and Coblenz.)

King has ordered the formation at and about Kaiserslautern of a combined body of troops for special purposes, which is to be composed of the following troops:

1. 3rd Landwehr division (hitherto under Inspector of *Etappen*, Second Army) to be detrained at Kaiserslautern.

2. 19th and 28th infantry and 7th Reserve Ulans, now at Mainz, to march on 7th.

3. Three reserve foot batteries, now at Mainz, to march at once.

4. Instead of 3rd Landwehr division Second Army *Etappen* to have following, to be sent by rail to Mosbach, arriving on and after Aug. 10: 53rd and 56th infantry regiments (now at Wesel), 16th and 55th Landwehr (at Minden), 5th reserve Hussars (at Paderborn).

Lack of accurate news of Weissenburg (on 4th) occasioned:

111. Mainz, Aug. 6, 9.10 a.m.

Telegram to Lt.-Gen. v. Blumenthal, Weissenburg (to be forwarded).

Till now not the smallest detail of the action at Weissenburg has reached the King, nor any approximate statement of our losses, while French newspaper accounts are already known here. Omission to be repaired at once.

Before the general head-quarters knew of the battle of Spicheren the following orders for a further advance were issued on the basis of the reports of Gen. v. Rheinbaben, commanding 5th and 6th cavalry divisions.

112. Mainz, Aug. 6, 5.45 p.m.

Telegram to Gen. v. Steinmetz, Sulzbach.

Enemy appears to be falling back from the Saar. His Majesty leaves you free to cross the frontier. Saar to be passed below Saarbrücken as road Saarbrücken–St.-Avold belongs to Second Army. To-morrow reports till 10 a.m. to here, 1 p.m. Ludwigshafen, 4 p.m. Kaiserslautern, from 6 p.m. on Homburg.

113. Mainz, Aug. 6, 5.45 p.m.

Telegram to Officer commanding Second Army, Homburg.

First Army crosses below Saarbrücken to-morrow to follow enemy. Desirable for infantry as well as cavalry of Second Army to hang

on to the enemy. Road Saarbrücken–St.-Avold belongs to Second Army. Reports to-morrow (as in 112).

114. Mainz, Aug. 6, 5.45 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY.

Enemy seems to be falling back from Saar. First and Second Armies are following. To-morrow reports (as in 112).

A telegram from Gen. Goeben from Saarbrücken, 6.50 p.m., gave general head-quarters the first news of the victory at Spicheren. Moltke at once inquired by telegram.

115. Mainz, Aug. 6, 7.45 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO GEN. V. GOEBEN, SAARBRÜCKEN.

Please state approximate strength of enemy, numbers of enemy regiments. Have prisoners been taken ?

116. Mainz, Aug. 7, 3.30 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY THROUGH V. GOEBEN, SAARBRÜCKEN (also to Officer commanding Second Army).

Third Army on 6th won fresh great victory over MacMahon with parts of Canrobert and Failly. Enemy's stand there and west of Saarbrücken makes it not improbable that strong enemy forces are still ready behind the Saar. Reconnaissance by cavalry requisite.

117. Mainz, Aug. 7, 8.15 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY.

Only just learned that after Crown Prince's victory yesterday at Wörth MacMahon retreated towards Bitsch. Might reach that place to-day and perhaps be reached to-morrow at Rohrbach by cavalry and left wing Second Army.

118. Mainz, Aug. 7, 3.30 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY, SULZ.

Till now only one telegram, dated 10 15 p.m. reached here from Sulz. Important data lacking. When the battle ? In what direction enemy retreat ?

119. Mainz, Aug. 7, 9.30 a.m.

TO LT.-GEN. V. BLUMENTHAL, SULZ.

Hearty congratulations on your brilliant success. Your first telegram of yesterday evening not arrived here, so learned only

early this morning that battle was at Wörth and that enemy was retiring on Bitsch. Telegraphed at once to Second Army that MacMahon can perhaps be caught near Rohrbach by cavalry and left wing of Second Army, in case he takes the direction of Saargemünd, which the French still hold.

Yesterday also hot fight in front of Forbach against four divisions of Frossard, to which came up one after another (the heads at least of) 14th, 16th, 5th, and parts of 6th divisions. The main body of the Second Army meant to-day to deploy on the line Saarbrücken–Neu-Hornbach, First Army to halt with main body at Forbach–Völklingen, following enemy with cavalry only.

As to intentions of enemy's main body, as yet only conjectures.

His most correct measure would perhaps be general offensive against Second Army, which, as the heads of its columns are constantly advancing, has not yet been able to close up with all its corps. Yet the French would strike upon superior forces, and such a vigorous resolve is little in accord with their conduct hitherto.

If the French main army goes back upon Metz it moves further away from MacMahon, and leaves him to your pursuit and possibly to a flank attack by the Second Army.

If MacMahon is to find a force to fall back on and the junction of the two parts of the French Army is to be accomplished, this can hardly be done except in the neighbourhood of Saarburg, where at a push we can arrive at the same time.

It is important for us to know whether MacMahon retreats westwards or south-westwards.

As far as the conditions can be gathered the correct course seems to me to be that the First and Second Armies should now advance, not against the Moselle above Metz, but in the first place southwards in order to establish connexion with you; but the next measures of the French main body must first give us some illumination.

Such troops of the enemy as are at Hagenau may perhaps be destined to hold Strassburg, where otherwise there is only *garde mobile*. You will have left the necessary forces to deal with them. It would be very desirable to take Hagenau in the first panic by a *coup de main*. Siege park ends mobilizing to-day. Siege of Strassburg can already be seriously contemplated now. Advance to Vendenheim would secure us the railway Strassburg–Nancy. A Landwehr division strengthened by two line infantry regiments and a cavalry regiment could, if need be, relieve what you have to leave behind.

Just off to Homburg.

120. Homburg, Aug. 7, 10.15 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, VÖLKLINGEN.

His Majesty orders that the First Army to-morrow remains halted with the VII and VIII army corps in its present position between Völklingen and Saarbrücken, and holds the heights of Spicheren against attack, if attack there be. Directions for further advance can follow only if cavalry has obtained sure information as to where the enemy is. Second Army also halts.

121. Homburg, Aug. 7, 11 p.m.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY, BLIESKASTEL.

His Majesty has declared himself fully agreed with the measures intended by you for the 8th as communicated to these headquarters by Major-Gen. v. Stiehle.

Reports from the Third Army say that after the battle of Wörth the enemy's army retreated in great confusion. Artillery tried to hold at Niederbronn, but was taken by Bavarians. Enemy back along road towards Bitsch pursued by cavalry, which took four guns. Dead and wounded mark line of retreat. Third Army has moved up to Niederbronn to-day. Of Failly's corps no part was present at the battle. As it has not yet been ascertained by the cavalry divisions whether the enemy retired from Forbach and Saargemünd upon Metz or to the south, the First Army has been ordered to remain to-morrow where it stands and to keep the Spicheren heights occupied. In this way the right flank of the Second Army is fully covered.

The telegram from Gen. v. Steinmetz[1] has been read to His Majesty. With regard to a proclamation or army order to be brought to the knowledge of the French nation His Majesty reserves the decision for himself.

122. Homburg, Aug. 8.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, VÖLKLINGEN, OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY, BLIESKASTEL, OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY, SULZ (to be forwarded).

His Majesty has ordered that all military messages, reports, and questions from the army commands to him must be addressed to me.

[1] See No. 125.

123. Homburg, Aug. 8.

TELEGRAM TO GEN. V. STEINMETZ, VÖLKLINGEN (to be forwarded).

As no information has yet been received whether the enemy has left Bolchen (Boulay) and Busendorf (Bouzonville) the First Army must remain to-morrow in the position ordered for to-day. The Second Army to-morrow brings up its last corps to the Saar. Telegraph receipt.

124. Homburg, Aug. 8, 11 p.m

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY, ST.-JOHANN (to be forwarded)

Will your head-quarters be at St.-Johann to-morrow? What movements ordered for to-morrow? II corps cannot detrain at Saarbrücken.

(Answer to inquiry whether II could detrain at Saarbrücken instead of Neunkirchen.)

125. ? Aug. 8.

PENCIL DRAFT, IN MOLTKE'S WRITING, OF A LETTER FROM THE KING TO GEN. V. STEINMETZ.

With reference to the telegram submitted to me, addressed by you on the 7th inst. to the head-quarters of the Second Army, I must point out that the original direction assigned to the First Army was towards Saarlouis. In order not to isolate the First Army, but that it might await in a flanking position the arrival of the Second Army, the First Army, by the orders of July 29 and Aug. 3, was kept back on the line Wadern–Saarburg and then around Tholey–Lebach. By extending its cantonments beyond the last-named line as far as Ottweiler, the First Army came into the line of march of the right wing of the Second Army, and was therefore by order of Aug. 5 recalled to the roads to Völklingen and Saarlouis for its further advance. Yet in spite of that order it went through Guichenbach and Fischbach towards Saarbrücken–Forbach, whence a further advance would be taken in flank by such enemy forces as might be assembled at Bolchen (Boulay).

I must therefore reject as unfounded the expostulations to the Second Army conveyed in your telegram, and expressly recognize that the Second Army was led forward precisely according to my intentions, and I have expressed this to General of Cavalry Prince Frederick Charles.

126. Homburg, Aug. 9, 9.10 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COASTS, HANOVER.

General head-quarters will be at Saarbrücken from to-day, 4 p.m.[1]

127. Saarbrücken, Aug. 9, 8 p.m.

TO OFFICERS COMMANDING FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD ARMIES.

Reports received suggest the conjecture that the enemy has retired behind the Moselle or perhaps behind the Seille.[2]

All three armies will follow this movement. For that purpose the Third Army receives the road Saarunion–Dieuze and the communication to the south, the Second Army: road St.-Avold–Nomény and south, the First Army: road Saarlouis–Bolchen–Teterchen and south.

For security of the march the cavalry must be pushed forward to a considerable distance and be supported by advance-guards pushed forward, so that in case of need the armies will have time each to concentrate itself.

Deviations from the above direction of march His Majesty will order in so far as the enemy's position or his advance may require.

The 10th of August may be employed by the First and Second Armies to let the troops rest or to set them on the roads assigned to them.

As the left wing cannot reach the Saar till the 12th the corps of the right wing must make proportionately short marches.

128. Saarbrücken, Aug. 9, 9.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY, MERZWEILER (to be forwarded).

First and Second Armies start advance towards Moselle on 10th; direction of Third Army with right wing Saarunion–Dieuze. Cavalry forward.

129. Saarbrücken, Aug. 10, 10.45 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING BADEN DIVISION, BRUMATH.

The commander of the troops standing against Strassburg is to be informed that His Majesty orders any approach of enemy

[1] Information of change of head-quarters was always sent to all the army commanders and to all governors-general.

[2] Between Aug. 7 and 9 Moltke made a sketch map of the enemy's positions, not here reproduced.

troops and *matériel* towards Strassburg, especially from the south, if possible to be prevented. Best would be complete investment, for which troops are on the way.[1]

130. Saarbrücken, Aug. 10, 12 noon.

TELEGRAM TO GRAND DUKE OF MECKLENBURG-SCHWERIN, HAMBURG.

The 1st Landwehr division is to be moved to the Rhine during the next few days. Executive Commission at Berlin to be at once informed of the points where the troops are, and the troops to be ordered to comply with the requirements of the railway line commission for the journey.

The Army Command to be constantly made acquainted with the position of the division.

131. Saarbrücken, Aug. 10, 3.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO MAJOR-GEN. SCHULER V. SENDEN, KAISERSLAUTERN, COMMANDING 3RD LANDWEHR DIVISION.

3rd Landwehr division to be set in march for Saarlouis at once. There await further orders (cp. No. 110).

132. Saarbrücken, Aug. 10.

TO OFFICERS COMMANDING FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD ARMIES.

To preserve order in the railway transport it is necessary that the Inspector-General of *Etappen* should confine himself to the use of those lines which have been assigned to his army, and as far as practicable should have transports of wounded and other transports sent back by those lines only. These transports must be reported to the line commission concerned as soon as possible, in any case on starting.

The Inspector-General of *Etappen* must keep the intendants, the line commissions concerned, and the Ministry of War at Berlin constantly informed of the position of the main *Etappen* place, and must also instruct the commandants of *Etappen* and other commandants to meddle as little as possible with the working of the railway lines.

[1] For this purpose were to be assembled at Hagenau :
1 Landwehr division (see No. 136: 12 battalions, 4 squadrons, 3 batteries).
Fusilier regiment 34.
Infantry regiment 30.
2nd reserve dragoon regiment.
2 reserve batteries Field Artillery Regiment 3.

18 battalions, 8 squadrons, 5 batteries.

After the organization of the *Etappen*, of which the regulations must be exactly complied with, the railway director at the Inspectorate-General of *Etappen* is the organ for regulating railway affairs.

For the Second Army was added :

It might be necessary to create a special Railway Line Commission for the railways west of Neunkirchen, and to secure supplies the deliveries for the First and Third Armies might have to be entrusted to the Intendant-General of the Second Army.

133. Saarbrücken, Aug. 10, 7.43 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF COASTS, HANOVER.

From to-morrow 5 p.m. general head-quarters at St.-Avold.

134. Saarbrücken, Aug. 10, 7.30 p.m.

TO GEN. V. STEINMETZ, ADDRESS TO BE ASKED FOR AT VÖLKLINGEN.

It is reported from other source that Your Excellency has to-day moved your head-quarters from Völklingen to Lauterbach.

No official report of this or of the movements of the First Army to-day, or of the changes, if any, contemplated for to-morrow in the positions of the First Army, has yet been received ; such report still awaited.

135. Saarbrücken, Aug. 10, 8.30 p.m.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, LAUTERBACH.

Following reports already received from Second Army :

II army corps (right wing) will reach Falkenberg to-morrow and send on an advance-guard beyond that place to support cavalry that has been sent forward.

IX army corps will reach Beningen–Merlenbach with head of column.

X army corps, main body to Hellimer, advance-guard towards Gr. Tänchen–Landorf.

G. to Insmingen, advance-guard towards Altdorf–Wirmingen–Mörchingen.

IV army corps will push head of column to Harskirchen, advance-guard to line Altweiler–Münster–Marimont.

XII will reach with head of column Metzingen–Dieblingen and Wustweiler.

Head-quarters Second Army will go to Püttlingen.

136. Saarbrücken, Aug. 10.

To Officers commanding First and Second Armies.

To prevent misunderstandings it is hereby determined that the Second Army is allowed to requisition in the places situated on the high road St. Avold–Trittelingen–Falkenberg–Herlingen–Han. a/d Nied–Noméný, but in addition to them only in the places situated ¼-mile north of that high road.[1]

137. Saarbrücken, Aug. 11, 6 a.m.

To Gen. v. Steinmetz, to be sought and found from Lauterbach.

I received at 10 p.m. the letter of yesterday[2] with which Your Excellency honoured me.

The occupation of Buschborn by the 35th regiment does not correspond with the orders of His Majesty for the advance of the army, and this must at once be set right.

I shall not fail to submit to His Majesty Your Excellency's wish regarding the trains, but must at once express my conviction that it is quite impossible to let the trains march otherwise than on the roads by which the corps to which they belong are themselves advancing. How inadmissible it is to depart from this practice is shown by the confusion which prevailed yesterday on the road to Forbach, where besides the trains of the III army corps were found those of VIII, VII, and I, and where to-day the IX corps is to follow.

Finally, I most respectfully reply that the three main roads indicated for the three armies hold good only until knowledge of the position of the enemy's principal forces has been obtained by means of the cavalry. Then it will be necessary for the armies not merely to concentrate each in itself but also to move nearer to one another, and at this moment it cannot be foreseen whether the First Army will pass round Metz (which in any case is merely to be watched) to the south or to the north. For the purpose of watching Metz a mobilized Landwehr division is already being brought up.

[1] Equals 1 English mile and 1 furlong.

[2] Gen. v. Steinmetz had complained in this letter that troops of the Second Army had been found on the road assigned to his army. He also requested that, in the further advance towards Metz, the trains of the First Army might be united at St.-Avold and afterwards allowed to follow along the road through Falkenberg.

138. Saarbrücken, Aug. 11, 10 a.m.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, TO BE SOUGHT AND FOUND FROM LAUTERBACH.

During the whole of yesterday His Majesty was without knowledge of the position of the head-quarters and of the corps of the First Army, and to-day until this hour it is unknown what movements are intended. His Majesty therefore refers the Army Command to the orders according to which daily reports are to be sent so that His Majesty can at any moment dispose of the corps, which becomes more necessary as the armies come nearer to the enemy.

Enclosed is a compilation of the reports received here through the Second Army, which in connexion with the conspectus sent you yesterday [1] of the movements of the Second Army for to-day will give you a basis for the further advance of the First Army.

It is reported that the trains of the First Army are on the road that passes through Forbach. His Majesty orders them to be removed without delay from this road, which was from the very beginning assigned to the Second Army.

Lastly, as regards the proposal made to His Majesty on the 8th inst. that trains on the Rhine–Nahe railway should be permanently earmarked for supplies for the First Army, His Majesty has decided that the First Army must for the present make the most of the land transport on the lines assigned to it, and that this cannot be supplemented by railway transport except in case of extremity. In that case the requisitions on the subject would have to state what *matériel* was to be forwarded, and to be addressed to the Intendant-General of the Army or, if it were a question of ammunition, to this office.

Enclosure.

Reports of Second Army till Aug. 10, 5 p.m.:

1. At Herny railway bridge blown up.
2. Small parties of infantry of MacMahon's corps marching on Metz.
3. In morning strong columns from Metz marching on Bolchen and Pange.
4. Trains full of soldiers from Châlons reached Metz during the night of 9th to 10th.
5. Camp of two enemy brigades seen at Pange.

[1] No. 135.

6. Strong columns of infantry and artillery marching from Metz towards Courcelles, Mont, and Pange.

From First Army no reports.

It may be assumed with certainty that a part of the French Army is encamping on the French Nied.

139. Saarbrücken, Aug. 11, 10.45 a.m.

To Major-Gen. v. Stiehle, Chief of General Staff, Second Army.

Thankful for all reports, the more so as we have none from First Army. I am not even able to tell you whither I, VIII, and VII are marching to-day. Sufficient steps have been taken to remedy such a condition.

Position behind Nied after all probably only position of observation ; main army perhaps after all behind Moselle. Suggest you should consider whether not to halt III in order to let the other corps come up.

140. Saarbrücken, Aug. 11, 11 a.m.

To Officers commanding First, Second, and Third Armies.

Cases of quite needless destruction of railways by our troops have constantly occurred, and it is therefore necessary again and again most distinctly to forbid any destruction of railways and telegraphs between the advancing armies and the enemy and to make the units, especially their officers, specially responsible for the observance of this order.

It is also necessary in our interest at once to occupy the telegraph offices, and especially the railway stations in the places reached by the troops, in order to protect them against destruction by the inhabitants or by individuals, and to secure the rolling stock.

141. St.-Avold, Aug. 11, 7 p.m.

To Officers commanding First and Second Armies.

It is not improbable that a considerable part of the enemy is in front of Metz on the left bank of the French Nied. It is therefore necessary for the First and Second Armies to close up further.

His Majesty has therefore ordered :

The III army corps at Falkenberg will be the pivot for the concentration.

The First Army will march early to-morrow with two corps to the line Bolchen-Möhringen, with one to Buschborn.

The Second Army will push the IX corps to Lubeln west of

St.-Avold, towards which latter place the II corps, as far as it is available, will close up.

The X corps will move (say through Lellingen) behind the III. G., IV, and XII will be brought up behind the left wing of the position above indicated so that they can shortly join on to it as needed or can continue marching in the direction of Nancy.

The outposts of the First Army are to be pushed on to the general line of the German Nied.

All the army corps are to leave the 2nd echelon of their trains in the *rayons* of to-day, entirely clearing the roads.

The head-quarters for to-morrow of both Army Commands are to be at once reported to here.

Added for Second Army :

Copy of above order has been sent to III army corps, and a preliminary telegram sent to IX army corps informing it of its destination.

142. St.-Avold, Aug. 11, 8 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING IX ARMY CORPS, FORBACH.

His Majesty orders the corps to march to-morrow by St.-Avold to Lubeln.

Second echelon of trains to be left in to-day's *rayon*, leaving the roads clear.

Aug. 11 in the morning Prince Frederick Charles to Moltke :

Püttlingen, Aug. 11, 9.45 a.m.

Your Excellency,

I sent you from Saargemünd the report that the enemy seems to have assembled in great masses behind the French Nied this side of Metz. Just arrived here, I hasten to let you know my views.

It seems as if this union of masses of the enemy would lead to a battle. I don't think it likely that the enemy will break out from his good position and attack us, though that would better appeal to the French character than their strict defensive so far. This defensive of his has been a failure ; conceivable that he now tries the offensive. For this to me improbable case I shall prepare myself in such a way that if possible he will not be able to fall upon the several corps before the Second Army has been so far united (i.e. except parts of IV and II) that they can fight all together.

You know my march for to-day. I shall hold the heads of my

columns going according to it, but expect the King's orders for a right wheel of my army (Pivot III corps).

I suggest that the First Army should be informed of the last paragraph but one, and should be set in march so that, in touch with my III corps, it can if necessary in part prolong the front towards the enemy, but more especially can envelop his left flank for some distance and with strong forces. Against the enemy's front I would not employ more than seems needed to hold him fast there—as in the procedure of my army at Sadowa—and to prevent him from breaking through our centre. I shall lay the main stress against the enemy's right flank, attack there in force, and let at least one corps follow my envelopment in echelon as a reserve.

We have for the most part enough with us to live for four or five days, thanks to the important stores taken at Saargemünd and Forbach. But Your Excellency will certainly do well to see that from to-morrow stores come up by railway to Falkenberg, and that troops of the II army corps, at least part of them, are sent on by rail to Falkenberg, or at the worst only to St.-Avold, in order to be as strong as possible in the battle. I respectfully beg for these things.

. . . . . .

All the corps are cheerful and will do their duty. All are burning to get at the enemy. In this respect the King may have the most complete confidence. We must be prepared for quite enormous losses and perhaps a two days' battle, though I don't think the latter likely, yet am making my arrangements for it. In the enemy's front we can deploy by day ; the preparatory movements against the flanks we must execute if possible by night along roads previously reconnoitred, lighting no fire, and begin the fight very early in the day, not after 5 a.m. God will stand by us !

143. St.-Avold, Aug. 11, 8 p.m.

To Prince Frederick Charles.

Your Royal Highness's gracious letter of this morning reached me here at 6 p.m. I have not time to send this reply at once by the orderly carrying the orders necessary at the moment. They are based upon the view expressed by Your Royal Highness, that a new leader of the army will rise to the vigorous and correct resolve of a sudden offensive while our army corps are dispersed from Saarlouis to Zabern ; but they take into consideration only the possibility directly before us of an attack on the III army corps.

A complete wheel to Verny would not be necessary, and might

even be doubtful if, as is also possible, the portion of the enemy behind the Nied were to retire and his main body should be south of Metz behind the Seille or the Moselle. I hope that the decisions made for the movement will meet Your Royal Highness's views. To-morrow afternoon we shall have six corps concentrated, two of them in a reserve position, and the day after to-morrow we can be ten corps strong.[1] If this should prove needless IV, XII, and G. need not be brought up, so as to continue on a broad front the march forward to the Moselle.[2]

. . . . . .

As in spite of all pressure the orderly is only starting now I give him this letter, of which Your Royal Highness will graciously excuse the haste.

144. St.-Avold, Aug. 12, 7 a.m.

To Officer commanding Second Army, Püttlingen.

(Supplementary to No. 141.)

As until now no reports have come in which seem to make it urgent to bring up X directly to the north of III, would it not be better, if still practicable, to direct X more towards the west?

145. St.-Avold, Aug. 12.

Telegram to Ministry of War, Berlin.

(Supplementary to No. 129.)

When and where will siege train be mobile and ready to start?

146. St.-Avold, Aug. 12, 7.15 a.m.

Telegram to Officer commanding Baden Division, Hagenau.

What measures have you taken on the basis of my cipher telegram of 10th inst.? Wire reply.

(Officer commanding division replied that he had posted to invest Strassburg two infantry brigades on north and west side and cavalry on the south side. A battalion was at Kehl.)

147. St.-Avold, Aug. 12, 11.50 a.m.

Telegram to Lt.-Gen. v. Fransecky, Saarbrücken.

When will the troops of II army corps be collected at Saarbrücken? When do the last trains arrive?

[1] Note of Prince Frederick Charles: 'i.e. including those corps that will have made a march and so won't be fresh.'

[2] Note of Prince Frederick Charles: 'This view will change as soon as Moltke has to-day's report that Nancy is clear, and that masses from Metz have again been seen marching towards the Nied.'

[Fransecky replied that the advance-guard was already in the triangle Neunkirchen–Homburg–Saarbrücken, except the greater part of the trains and columns, which were *en route* from Berlin to Saarbrücken and would be collected at Homburg and Neunkirchen on Aug. 14.]

148. St.-Avold, Aug. 12.

To Officer commanding First Army, Bolchen.

The First Army from now on can fetch its supplies, as far as its requirements are not covered by requisitions and its own transport, from the railway stations at Forbach, St.-Avold, and Falkenberg. But wagons sent to these points must as far as possible avoid the high road Falkenberg–Forbach.

149. St.-Avold, Aug. 12, 4.30 p.m.

To Officers commanding First, Second, and Third Armies.

As far as can be gathered from the reports received, the enemy's main force is retreating through Metz across the Moselle.

His Majesty has ordered :

The First Army will advance to-morrow, Aug. 13, towards the French Nied, main body to the line Tennschen–Pange, and will secure the railway station of Courcelles. Cavalry will reconnoitre towards Metz and cross the Moselle below. The First Army will thus cover the right flank of the Second Army.

The Second Army will march towards the line Buchy–Château Salins and send its outposts to the Seille ; it will try if possible to get hold of the crossings of the Moselle at Pont-à-Mousson, Dieulouard, Marbache, &c. Cavalry will reconnoitre beyond the Moselle.

The Third Army will continue its advance towards the line Nancy–Lunéville. Its further employment will be determined during the next few days.

The trains can everywhere follow their army corps to the Moselle and Meurthe.

General head-quarters from 5 p.m. to-morrow at Herlingen. Until 2 p.m. reports to here.

150. St.-Avold, Aug. 12, 5.30 p.m.

Telegram to the Governor-General of the Coasts, Hanover.

General head-quarters from 5 p.m. to-morrow at Herlingen, west of Falkenberg.

151. St.-Avold, Aug. 12, 5.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-GEN. V. KUMMER, MAINZ.

The troops under your command are all on the march to Saarlouis and neighbourhood, where they will arrive on 15th and 16th. Written instructions from me on the way thither.

(Lt.-Gen. v. Kummer was commander of the troops for a 'special purpose' referred to in Nos. 110, 131, and called 3rd reserve division.)

152. St.-Avold, Aug. 13, 11 a.m.

TO LT.-GEN. V. KUMMER, SAARLOUIS.

The King's orders for the employment of the detachment placed under your orders, to which shortly will be added

3rd reserve Ulan regiment } to be assigned to the brigade of
5th reserve Ulan regiment } Major.-Gen. v. Stranz,

are as follows:

It is the mission of the 3rd reserve division to take Metz by assault and to prepare the siege of that fortress by a preliminary investment. Thionville is to be watched. In any case enterprises from Metz against the communications of the armies that continue their advance are to be prevented. Until the arrival of the 3rd reserve division a detachment of the First Army[1] will remain before Metz, and will inform Your Excellency of the conditions, &c., before that fortress. At present it is not known in what way the enemy's garrison will be composed.

153. St.-Avold, Aug. 13.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-GEN. V. FRANSECKY, SAARBRÜCKEN.

Risking transport of troops and trains of II army corps beyond Neunkirchen or Homburg not admissible.

154. St.-Avold, Aug. 13, 11.30 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF COASTS, HANOVER.

Guard Landwehr division must comply with instructions of line commission for railway transport to Karlsruhe.

There await further orders from Lt.-Gen. v. Werder.[2] Silesian Landwehr battalions will reach Hanover to replace Guard Landwehr.

[1] The First Army was ordered to leave a division before Metz.
[2] Werder commanded siege of Strassburg.

155. Herlingen, Aug. 13, 9 p.m.

To Officers commanding First and Second Armies.

According to the reports received until now large bodies of the enemy halted this morning at Servigny and Borny, this side of Metz.

His Majesty orders that the First Army is to remain to-morrow, Aug. 14, in its position on the French Nied and by advance-guards pushed forward watch whether the enemy withdraws or moves forward to attack.

In view of the latter eventuality the III corps of the Second Army will advance to-morrow only as far as Pagny, the IX to Buchy in the direction of the Moselle (at Pont-à-Mousson), where if it starts early it will be ready at the distance of a mile[1] to take part in a serious engagement in front of Metz. The road from Herlingen by Buchy to Pagny must be kept clear of all trains.

In other events the First Army is in a position by a flank attack to prevent any advance of the enemy towards the south.

The other corps of the Second Army will continue the advance towards the Moselle between Pont-à-Mousson and Marbache. The X corps will take position beyond Pont-à-Mousson.

The cavalry of both armies must be pushed forward as far as possible, and must disturb the possible retreat of the enemy on the road Metz–Verdun.

156. Herlingen, Aug. 14.

To Lt.-Gen. v. Werder, Hagenau.

By His Majesty's orders I respectfully inform Your Excellency that the troops under your orders have been set on the march as follows, and are either ready waiting your orders or will arrive to receive them:

Fusilier regiment 34 at Hagenau, where at present it is under Lt.-Gen. v. Beyer.
Regiment 30 at Hagenau.
2nd reserve dragoons at Hagenau.
Guard Landwehr division at Karlsruhe.
1st Landwehr division at Karlsruhe.
Reserve battery Field Artillery Regiment 1 at Karlsruhe.
Two reserve batteries Field Artillery Regiment 3 at Karlsruhe.
Baden division already at Strassburg.
The siege train and the requisite fortress artillery and fortress

[1] 4½ English miles.

pioneer company have been mobilized and will shortly be sent by train as near to Strassburg as possible.

The task of Your Excellency is to take Strassburg as soon as possible.

157. Herlingen, Aug. 14.

To Officers commanding First, Second, and Third Armies.

The satisfactory order kept on the march by the artillery and the train-columns is much diminished by the negligence of the hired or impressed supply vehicles.

His Majesty therefore orders the following points to be observed with absolute stringency :

1. All vehicles must keep to the right side of the road and leave the left side clear.

Vehicles or columns overtaking and passing at a quicker pace must keep as near as possible to the slower column on their right.

2. Batteries and ammunition columns may march two vehicles abreast, and should do so if the column they belong to is marching ready for action, or when the commanding officer can be sure that other columns will not come to the road from either side and that other columns will not be met. But this is permissible only when the road is wide enough to admit of another vehicle passing.

3. Any column halting of its own initiative to rest or feed must in all circumstances clear the road and park beside it. This holds also for sutlers' vehicles, which must be removed from the road when the horses, &c., are tired.

4. All officers commanding troops and all field gendarmerie must again be instructed to insist energetically on the observance of these regulations and severely to punish or to report to higher authority those who infringe them.

158. Herlingen, Aug. 14.

To the Minister of War, Gen. v. Roon.

In reference to your favour of the 12th inst. I have the honour to inform your Excellency that by His Majesty's command the I army corps and the 1st cavalry division have been assigned to the First Army ; the II, IX, and XII corps to the Second Army ; and the VI corps and the 2nd cavalry division to the Third Army.

Also the Guard Landwehr division has been ordered to move to reinforce the troops left before Strassburg, and has to begin with been dispatched by rail to Karlsruhe.

The division will be replaced at Hanover by Landwehr regiments 23, 63, 22, 62, and these troops will be withdrawn for that purpose from Cosel and Glatz and sent on by rail from Frankenstein.

159. Herlingen, Aug. 14.

DRAFT OF OPERATION ORDER FOR AUG. 15. (Not sent.)

The First Army will march to-morrow to its left and establish itself on the line Pommérieux–Arry, between Seille and Moselle, south of Metz.

A division will remain at Courcelles. It is destined to undertake the observation of Metz so soon as it may be presumed that only the war garrison is in and about the place, and it will be relieved as soon as possible by the mobile 3rd Landwehr division.

The right wing of the Second Army (IX and XII army corps) marching on Pont-à-Mousson will be ready, a mile[1] away, to support the First Army in case of need.

Those portions of the 6th cavalry division which are still facing Metz can be taken back to the Second Army during the afternoon.

The Second Army will continue its march to the Moselle. It would be well to give the troops, each body in turn, a day's rest after the crossing, but the officer commanding the Second Army will take care to lose no time in sending on as strong a force of cavalry as he can, supported if possible by detachments of infantry, towards the road Metz–Verdun.

It will depend on the reports received from the First Army whether that army too can advance by the shortest route against the same road. Crossings of the Moselle below Pont-à-Mousson must at once be reconnoitred and prepared.

160. Apparently Aug. 14. SKETCH OF OPERATIONS.

If the reconnaissances show that large masses are still before and behind Metz:

First Army. Line Courcelles–Arry–Pournoy.

XII corps, as support, has its rest-day at Buchy–Solgne.

Together . . . . 120,000 men.
As soon as II corps comes up 150,000 men.

X corps has rest-day to-day. Aug. 15, Gorze with 3rd Cavalry division.

Aug. 16. Five corps behind the Madine, i.e. on left bank of Moselle facing Metz also, 150,000.

Third Army marching on Paris.

[1] 4½ English miles.

161. Herlingen, Aug. 14, 6 p.m.

To Officers commanding First, Second, and Third Armies, and to Officers commanding III, IX, and XII Army Corps.

The observations of the First Army towards Metz to-day have not cleared up the situation before that place with certainty. It is therefore possible that the greater part of the enemy's army is still this side of Metz.

Considering that the armies need a rest-day after their arduous marches and that a rest-day for some of the corps can be combined with greater security against possible offensive enterprises from Metz, His Majesty orders :

The heads of III, IX, XII will to-morrow remain where they are, these corps closing up and cooking their dinners early.

The First Army, too, will remain with I and VII in to-day's positions ; VIII (except the portion detached via Bolchen) will move to Bazoncourt-Alben for closer connexion with the right wing of the Second Army, whereby at the same time the movement of the First Army to its left, which will be necessary later, will be facilitated. The further advance of the cavalry, in particular of the 3rd cavalry division, is not restricted. But in order fully to clear up the situation it is absolutely necessary to move forward with considerable force on the left bank of the Moselle against the enemy's road communications Metz–Verdun.

To this purpose the Second Army will devote all the cavalry available on the left bank of the Moselle, and will support it in the direction of Gorze and Thiaucourt by those corps which first cross the Moselle.

The III army corps must therefore to-morrow prepare a crossing below Pont-à-Mousson.

The II army corps will continue its march in the direction hitherto followed.

The battle of Aug. 14 necessitated the following orders on the 15th :

162. Herlingen, Aug. 15, a.m.

Telegram to Officer Commanding Second Army, Pont-a-Mousson.

Yesterday evening I and VII, after a serious fight, drove back into Metz strong bodies of the enemy. Parts of the 18th division joined in. IX will to-day move nearer to the battle-field. Disposal of III corps is reserved for the present.

Pursuit on road Metz–Verdun important.

163. Herlingen, Aug. 15, a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING FIRST ARMY, VARIZE.

His Majesty orders the First Army to maintain to-day the ground won in yesterday's battle, so far as it is not within effective range of the guns of the fortress. VIII is to be brought up at once to support I and VII. IX, which joined in the action, will be drawn nearer to the battle-field. II to-day will reach Hans-s.-Nied with its head. His Majesty goes to Pange.

164. Herlingen, Aug. 15.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING IX ARMY CORPS.

The IX army corps will advance at once with all its forces to Peltre–Jury to be ready in case of an advance by the enemy. His Majesty is going to Pange.

N.B.—Received at 5 a.m.

165. Flanville, Aug. 15, 10.45 a.m. TO GEN. V. STEINMETZ.

As His Majesty has convinced himself that no enemy is left in front of Metz to-day the advance of the First Army is no longer required.

Word has been sent direct to I and VII that they are to halt and send on only cavalry to observe the fortress and protect the wounded.

VIII, so far as it has been set in march, is to direct its movement to Orny, and has received direct instructions to that effect.

166. Flanville, Aug. 15, 11 a.m.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING VIII ARMY CORPS.

As His Majesty has convinced himself that at this moment not many troops are in front of Metz the further advance of VIII army corps is no longer required. If, however, the corps is on the march it should now be directed upon Orny.

167. Flanville, Aug. 15, 11 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING SECOND ARMY.

French completely thrown back into Metz and probably by now in full retreat towards Verdun. All three corps of the right wing (III, XII, and IX) are now at your free disposal; XII is already on the march to Noméný.

168. Herlingen, Aug. 15, 6.30 p.m.

To Officers commanding First, Second, and Third Armies.

As long as it has not been ascertained whether more than the war garrison has remained in Metz it will be necessary to leave an army corps of the First Army near Courcelles, to be relieved as soon as possible by the detachment of Lt.-Gen. v. Kummer coming up from Saarlouis. The other two corps of the First Army will take position to-morrow, Aug. 16, between Seille and Moselle, on about the line Arry–Pommérieux. A crossing-point over the Moselle must be at once reconnoitred and prepared, unless this has already been done in that neighbourhood by the III army corps, in which case it must be left standing for the use of the First Army.

By telegram sent at 11 a.m. to-day the Second Army has again been given the free disposal of all its corps. A prompt report on their movements is expected, and the following is noted :

The conditions in which I, VII, and parts of the 18th division won a victory yesterday evening quite excluded pursuit. The fruits of the victory can be reaped only by the vigorous offensive of the Second Army against the roads from Metz both by Fresnes and by Étain to Verdun. It may be left to the commander of the Second Army to conduct that offensive according to his own judgement with all the means at his disposal. Although in this way the Second Army will find itself for a time before the First, care will here be taken to make the arrangements necessary (but not yet admitting of being fully foreseen) for the further advance westwards and for giving the troops as much rest as is needed. The heads of the columns of the Third Army have to-day reached the line Nancy–Dombasle–Bayon ; its cavalry has sent parties towards and to the south of Toul. His Majesty's general head-quarters will be to-morrow at 5 p.m. at Pont-à-Mousson. Till 1 p.m. reports to here.

169. Herlingen, Aug. 16.

Open Order for the Troops concerned of both Armies.

The IX corps is to-day, if possible, to cross the Moselle near Arry at the passage prepared by the Third Army, or at least to move close up to the river. It is therefore requisite for the First Army to let the IX army corps pass before it, and the bivouacs of the VIII army corps must be modified accordingly.

The news that a battle had begun at Vionville–Mars-la-Tour occasioned the following orders on the evening of Aug. 16 :

170. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 16, 5 p.m.

To Officer commanding First Army, Pommérieux.

The enemy retiring from Metz has been attacked to-day at Rezonville by the III army corps from Gorze. The X army corps is being brought up from the west. In order to press the enemy northwards away from Châlons and Paris and because he is in great strength, His Majesty orders that the two available corps of the First Army cross the Moselle immediately behind the troops of the IX army corps.

The trains of all three corps must remain on the right bank until the troops have passed the defile formed by the river.

The further direction of the VIII and VII army corps must be regulated by the G.O.C. First Army with no other consideration than that they may reach the enemy as quickly as possible.

To restore the deployment of both armies for the further advance is reserved for general head-quarters.

171. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 16, 8 p.m.

To Officer commanding Second Army, Thiaucourt.

The First Army has been instructed to cross the Moselle early to-morrow with VIII and VII immediately behind the troops of IX, and to lead them the shortest way to the enemy.

The arrangement of the First and Second Armies for a further advance westwards can come later; for the moment the most important matter is to drive as large a part as possible of the enemy's main force northwards away from Châlons and Paris and to pursue it up to and, if need be, also upon the territory of Luxemburg.

The rest of the Second Army can now halt and rest, and it will be enough to occupy the crossings of the Meuse with parties pushed forward.

Before head-quarters Second Army had sufficient knowledge of the seriousness of the battle of Vionville–Mars-la-Tour, Major-Gen. v. Stiehle wrote the following letter to Moltke, leaving it to be delivered to general head-quarters on arrival at Pont-à-Mousson, while head-quarters Second Army rode off to the battle-field. The order mentioned is given in Prussian Staff Hist., Part I, Appendix 20.

H.Q. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 16, 2 p.m.

Enclosed the Army Order for to-morrow just issued.

The report of III army corps from Vionville, 10 a.m., leads to the inference that a strong detachment of the enemy has been pushed away and is retreating on Thionville; the III army corps has been

instructed to follow immediately with its left wing forward in order to drive the enemy either into the fortress of Thionville or against the Belgian frontier. As something of this sort was to be foreseen, to-day's Army Order gives the right wing (X, III, IX) of the Second Army a certain independence, and Gen. v. Voigts-Rhetz in that event the disposal of it in case Prince Frederick Charles should not himself be on the spot.

I think it correct to leave the four other corps of the Second Army quietly advancing towards the Meuse from Bannoncourt to Commercy in order to seize the passages to-morrow. Then we shall probably have to halt for several days in order not to move out from the Argonne into the plain of Champagne with isolated heads of columns.

As the reports from the cavalry of the left wing describe Toul as weakly held and little prepared, it has been pointed out to Gen. v. Alvensleben (IV army corps) how important for our railway communications a successful *coup de main* against Toul would be. We must be content to suggest this idea; without more precise knowledge of the situation an order would not be justified. . . .
Just received, 2 p.m. :

Gen. v. Krantz reports from Thiaucourt, 11 a.m., that III army corps is engaged at Rezonville against strong forces. Gen. v. Rheinbaben is on the spot with nine regiments cavalry and four batteries ; 20th division marching to the battle, 19th division is being informed. We are just off to the battle-field via Gorze.

Moltke replied :

172. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 16, 8 p.m.

To Major-Gen. v. Stiehle.

According to the view of general head-quarters the decision of the campaign consists in driving back northwards the enemy's main force retreating from Metz. The more the III army corps has in front of it the greater will be the success to-morrow, when we shall have available against the enemy the X, III, IX, VIII, VII army corps, and possibly also XII.

Not till this main purpose has been fulfilled would the First and Second Armies be deployed with a view to marching on towards the west. Those corps of the Second Army which do not take part can halt now.

To reach the Meuse quicker is of little, but to take Toul of great, value. There is at present no need to march off the three corps from the Second Army.

173. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 17, 2 a.m.

To Officer commanding First Army, Coin-sur-Seille.

Yesterday III and X held their ground. But it is urgent that they should be supported as early as possible at dawn.

Those corps of the Second Army which are coming up have greater distances to cover than the First Army. The immediate start of the latter by all existing crossings (presumed to have been already arranged) is required.

His Majesty will start directly for Gorze, where he expects reports.

174. Height south of Flavigny, Aug. 17, 1.45 p.m.

To Officers commanding First and Second Armies.

The Second Army will start to-morrow, 18th, at 5 a.m. and advance in echelon (from the left) between the Yron and Gorze streams (roughly speaking between Ville-sur-Yron and Rezonville). The VIII army corps is to join on to this movement on the right wing of the Second Army. The VII army corps will at first have the task of securing the movement of the Second Army against possible enterprises from the direction of Metz. Further decisions of His Majesty will depend on the enemy's measures. Reports to His Majesty are to be sent for the present to the height south of Flavigny.

175. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 17, 10 p.m.

To Gen. v. Manteuffel, Courcelles.

In the event (very improbable, since the corps of Frossard, Decaen (previously Bazaine), Ladmirault, and Imperial Guard were defeated yesterday at Vionville after a long and bloody battle by the III, X, and parts of VIII and IX army corps) of the French Army during the next few days falling with superior forces on the I army corps, it would accord with His Majesty's intentions if Your Excellency were to evade the blow by moving in the direction of Remilly to cover our communications.

The following was issued from Pont-à-Mousson early on Aug. 18, just before general head-quarters started from there :

176. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 18, 4 a.m.

To Officer commanding First Army, Ars-sur-Moselle.

There is no change in the arrangements for command of the First Army. Direct orders of His Majesty are to be expected to-day also on the battle-field.

The VII army corps will at first have to act on the defensive.

The connexion with the VIII army corps can be sought only towards the front.

If it should turn out that the enemy's army throws itself into Metz a right wheel will be made by our army.

Direct support of the First Army will, if required, be given by the second line of the Second Army.

During the battle of Gravelotte–St Privat the following written communications were sent from general head-quarters:

177. Height south of Flavigny, Aug. 18, 9.20 a.m.

To Officer commanding Second Army.

Insignificant skirmishing on right wing of VII. The troops visible on the height towards Metz seem to be moving northwards, probably towards Briey. It does not look as if the First Army would require greater support than that of III army corps from Vionville or St.-Marcel.

178. Height south of Flavigny, Aug. 18, 10.30 a.m.

To Officer commanding Second Army.

From the reports received it may be assumed that the enemy means to maintain himself on the plateau between Le-Point-du-Jour and Montigny-la-Grange.

Four battalions of the enemy have advanced into the Bois-des-Genivaux.

His Majesty considers that it would be to the purpose to set the XII and G. corps marching in the direction of Batilly, in order to reach the enemy at Ste.-Marie-aux-Chênes in case he marches off towards Briey, and to attack him from Amanvillers in case he remains on the height.

The attack would have to be made at the same time by the First Army from Bois-de-Vaux and Gravelotte, by the IX corps against Bois-des-Genivaux and Verneville, and by the left wing of the Second Army from the north.

179. Height south of Flavigny, Aug. 18, 12 noon.

To Gen. v. Steinmetz.

The fight we now hear is only a partial engagement in front of Verneville, and does *not* imply a general attack by the First Army, which ought not to show large masses of troops but only artillery to prepare for attack later on.

180. Height south of Flavigny, Aug. 18, 1.45 p.m.

To Officer commanding Second Army.

The IX army corps is already engaged in an artillery action in front of Bois Doseuillons. The serious general attack on the whole line will not be made until strong forces can go forward from Amanvillers.

181. Aug. 19, 8.45 a.m.

To the First and Second Armies.

1. The burial of the dead and of the fallen horses will be carried out by the troops in their *rayons*, the road from Metz to Verdun forming the boundary between the First and Second Armies. The places on this road fall to the Second Army, including the II army corps. The same division of *rayons* is to hold for requisitioning.

2. The Second Army is to send a squadron to the Inspectorate-General of *Etappen* at Pont-à-Mousson to be at the disposal of the Intendant-General.

182. Height before Fort St. Quentin, Aug. 19, 11 a.m.

To the Officers commanding First, Second, and Third Armies and the Crown Prince of Saxony.

After the events of the last few days it is needful and possible to give the troops sufficient rest and to bring up reserves to fill up the gaps caused by our losses. It is also requisite that the armies should keep abreast during the further advance towards Paris, in order to be able to confront in sufficient strength the new formations which are assembling probably at Châlons. Moreover, considering that the French Army which has been thrown back upon Metz might risk the attempt to break through to the west, it will be appropriate to leave on the left bank of the Moselle six army corps, which can oppose this advance on the heights conquered yesterday. On the right bank will remain one army corps and the reserve division, which must, if necessary, evade attack by superior forces. For this investment His Majesty selects the II, III, IX, and X army corps in addition to the First Army and the 3rd reserve division. His Majesty entrusts to Prince Frederick Charles the command of all the troops destined for the investment of the principal French Army, and also orders that the G., IV, and XII army corps, with the 5th and 6th cavalry divisions, shall come under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony until the original subdivision into

armies can be restored. The staff of the Crown Prince of Saxony will be organized at once.

The main ridge chosen for defence must be fortified, and cantonments can be occupied stretching back from that ridge to the Orne.

The three corps temporarily separated from the Second Army will occupy quarters beyond the rivers Orne and Yron. The Third Army is for the present to halt on the Meuse.

His Majesty's head-quarters will remain for the present at Pont-à-Mousson, where a battalion of the II army corps is to be left.

183. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 30.

To Lt.-Gen. v. Kummer.

Your Excellency is respectfully informed that, as the principal French Army has been forced by the actions of Aug. 16 and 18 to withdraw into the fortress of Metz, it has become necessary to tell off a large body of troops to invest this place.

H.R.H. Prince Frederick Charles has taken over the command of this investing army, and accordingly Your Excellency and the troops under your command come under the immediate orders of His Royal Highness, whose head-quarters are at Doncourt.

184. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 20.

Changes in the Distribution of Troops.

1. The general command of the coast lands, the 17th division with its pontoon train, and the 2nd cavalry division are to be transported by railway to Neunkirchen and Homburg.

To replace them Landwehr regiments 10 and 50 are to go from Neisse to the province of Hanover, and the governor-general of the coasts is recommended to move towards the coast of the North Sea Landwehr regiments 3 and 43 from Königsberg in Prussia and Landwehr regiment 45 from Graudenz and Thorn.

2. For the investment of Thionville a detachment will be formed of:

Infantry regiment 65 (two battalions of the Inspector-General of *Etappen* of the First Army, one battalion from Cöln).
Landwehr regiments 28 and 68 } from Cöln.
One heavy reserve battery regiment 7 }
4 reserve hussar regiments (from Neisse, Glatz, and Cosel).
The Inspector-General of *Etappen* will receive instead the 17th Landwehr regiment from Wesel.

3. The regiment of Ziethen Hussars 3 will be taken out of the 6th cavalry division and placed at the disposal of H.R.H. Prince Frederick Charles.

185. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 20.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-GEN. v. WERDER, MUNDOLSHEIM, BEFORE STRASSBURG.

Bombardment of Strassburg from Kehl quite justified if by this means capitulation can be obtained, but that cannot be judged from here.

186. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 21.

TO MAJOR-GEN. v. STIEHLE.

The dispatch of 50 heavy 12-pounders has been ordered by telegram. Their arrival at Ars-sur-Moselle before Metz will be announced by telegram direct.

I should merely like to point out that a possible break through of the enclosed army towards the north-east seems to us by far the less dangerous, but an advance towards the south very awkward. It would interrupt the line Frouard-Strassburg, which will be specially valuable in our advance towards Châlons. Now that the strength of the investing army has been brought up to 7½ army corps a stubborn resistance ought to be possible on the right bank (as well as on the left), at any rate in case of break out towards the south.

187. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 21.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE METZ.

The regulation of the lines of communication for all the troops stationed about Metz should be carried out by your head-quarters with as little change as possible in the arrangements already existing.

Broadly speaking, only the railway to Courcelles is available for your troops, as that by Nancy is still required by the Third Army and the detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

For that detachment it is necessary to organize a provisional Inspectorship-General of *Etappen* in connexion with the Intendant-General of the army. For this purpose in present conditions Col. v. Blücher and his staff can be set free the more readily because in the suggested regulation of the lines of communication the Inspectorship-General of *Etappen* of the Second Army would probably find its most suitable situation at Remilly.

Thereupon as soon as possible four battalions and two squadrons of the *Etappen* troops of the Second Army (soon to be reinforced by four Saxon battalions), chosen as far as possible from the leading troops, must be transferred to the newly installed Inspector-Generalship of *Etappen*.

188. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 21.

To Officers commanding the Army before Metz, the First and Third Armies, the Detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, and to Lt.-Gen. v. Werder.

The French Government has ordered the formation of the *gardes mobiles* (including the class 1869).

They are to be assembled in the chief towns of the *arrondissements*, and the uniform is to consist in a blue blouse with a leather belt and a red cross on the sleeve, linen trousers, and *képi*.

Wherever men of this category are found they are to be treated as prisoners of war.

All commanders and inspectors of *Etappen* under your command are to be instructed accordingly.

189. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 21, 11 a.m.

To Officers commanding the Army before Metz, the First and Third Armies, and to H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

Now that a great part of the French Army has been beaten and is invested in Metz by $7\frac{1}{2}$ army corps the advance westwards must be continued by the detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Third Army in such wise that the latter keeps to the left of the former and in advance of it by one march, in order, in case the enemy makes a stand, to attack him in front and on his right flank and to push him away from Paris towards the north.

According to the reports received here there are parties of the enemy first of all at Verdun probably only retreating to Châlons, where, however, are collecting parts of the corps of MacMahon and Failly and also troops newly raised, and odd regiments from Paris and the west and south of France. Towards Châlons up to the 26th August the detachment of the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Third Army are to concentrate on the line Ste.-Ménehould–Vitry-le-François.

The former is to start on Aug. 23 and to be directed upon the line Ste.-Ménehould–Daucourt–Givry-en-Argonne, where the advance-guards must arrive on Aug. 26. Verdun must be taken by a *coup-de-main* or passed round to the south.

The Third Army will start so as to reach the line St.-Mard-sur-le-Mont–Vitry-le-François with its advance-guards on Aug. 26.

The great head-quarters of H.M. the King will go on the 23rd to Commercy, where the IV army corps must leave a battalion as garrison.

190. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 22.

To the Governor-General of the Coasts, Hanover.

H.M. the King has ordered the formation of two reserve army corps, of which one is to be assembled at Berlin, the other at Glogau.

For establishing the former your Government will arrange as soon as possible the transport by railway of Landwehr regiments 1, 3, 4, 5, 43, and 45 and of the 1st reserve regiment of Ulans.

191. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 22.

To the Governor-General of Posen.

H.M. the King has ordered the formation of two new reserve army corps at Berlin and Glogau.

For the establishment of the latter are destined in the first instance Landwehr regiments 7, 47, 10, 50, 84, and 85, as well as the 1st reserve regiment of Ulans, already placed at your disposal, and also the three reserve batteries of the VI army corps.

The transport of the 84th and 85th Landwehr regiments will be arranged by the deputy-commander of the IV army corps.

All the other arrangements are hereby left to you, and you are to note that until the army corps is fully formed the several units are provisionally to be under the command of the immobile staff of the deputy-commander of the V army corps.

192. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 22.

To Officer commanding the Army before Metz, to Officer commanding the First and Third Armies, and to H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

H.M. the King permits, by way of departure from the principles otherwise normal, officers commanding troops to be authorized, in case of a march with an action in prospect, to allow the medicine carts also to march immediately after the troops.

193. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 22.

To Officer commanding the Army before Metz, to Officers commanding the First and Third Armies, and to H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony and to Lt.-Gen. v. Werder.

In all the departments the formation of free corps has been taken in hand. They are called *francs-tireurs*.

Uniform :
Blue *képi* with thin red stripe ;
Light civil coat (blouse) ;
Red woollen girdle (*ceinture*) ;
Linen trousers with white spats ; bread-bag.

Arms :
Carbine (*à la tabatière*) ; bayonet.

According to reports these men's task is to be to fall upon and shoot any soldiers marching in isolation.

But as the *francs-tireurs* themselves are not soldiers they are subject, according to Proclamation, Article 2, to the law of war and liable to the death penalty.

194. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 22.

To Prince H.R.H. Frederick Charles of Prussia, Doncourt.

(Reply to a private letter from the Prince of which the contents can be gathered from the reply.)

To Your Royal Highness I reply, most obediently, that it has not hitherto been possible to place at the disposal of the field army a number of the officers of the general staff still kept back at home nor to diminish still further the working strength of the staff of H.M. the King, already weakened by parting with Capt. v. Bülow. But, in order as far as possible to meet the wishes of Your Royal Highness, Major Baron v. Holleben shall be appointed to the staff of the Crown Prince of Saxony.

The difficulties and the disagreeable features of the very important task which has fallen to Your Royal Highness cannot but be perceived, but they will probably be of short duration. If the enemy succeeds in breaking through, which he will probably try to do in the direction of Nancy, the investment will at once be transformed into field war. As we can count upon a most vigorous pursuit, in that case in my opinion the advance of the other two armies would continue without interruption.

If the French Army in Metz is unable to break through, it certainly cannot long exist there, as its relief is impossible, and Your Royal Highness will reap in its capitulation one of the greatest successes which military history has to record.

195. Pont-à-Mousson, Aug. 22, 11 a.m.

Telegram to the Governor-General of the Coasts, Hanover.

Reports to His Majesty till to-morrow 10 a.m. to here, then to Commercy.

196. Commercy, Aug. 23, 3 p.m.

To Lt.-Gen. v. Blumenthal, Ligny.

In reply to Your Excellency's favour of the 22nd inst., enclosing the march tables of the Third Army for the next few days, I have the honour to reply that it would meet His Majesty's intentions if the cavalry divisions remained in front of the army the whole time and also on Aug. 26. According to the reports received here it is not improbable that the enemy's army assembled at Châlons is marching away from there. In that case it is desirable to ascertain by the cavalry, pushed on beyond and also to the north of Châlons, the precise direction of the enemy's march; moreover, it may be necessary to change all the marches to be made on the 26th inst. by the Third Army. For the same reason, and in order to have more roads for the further advance, it is suggested that, if still practicable, the VI corps should be sent on to-morrow towards Joinville, so that, if need be, it could be pushed on the day after to-morrow to St.-Dizier.

197. Commercy, Aug. 23.

To the Crown Prince of Saxony, Jeandelize.

The head-quarters of H.M. the King will be to-morrow at Bar-le-Duc. Till 10 a.m. reports to here. You are requested to send here as soon as possible the march tables of your detachment, if possible for some days in advance.

198. Commercy, Aug. 24.

To Officer commanding First Army, Ars-sur-Moselle.

His Majesty permits, in view of the present great distance of his own head-quarters from those of the First Army, that the order requiring two reports a day may be suspended. But His Majesty still expects prompt reports of important occurrences so long as there is telegraphic communication.

199. Commercy, Aug. 24, 7 a.m.

To H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

According to a report received here the Emperor Napoleon with part of his forces is at Reims. But a letter sent out from Metz by an enemy officer of high rank suggests that in Metz they count with certainty on relief by the troops assembled at Châlons. Accordingly the railway line Reims–Longuyon–Thionville acquires

a certain importance. Its thoroughgoing interruption at several points is desirable, and also observation by cavalry in the direction of Reims.

200. Commercy, Aug. 21, 7 a.m.

To Officer commanding the Army before Metz, Doncourt.

According to a report received here the Emperor Napoleon with part of his forces is at Reims, while in Metz they count upon relief by the forces assembled at Châlons. Accordingly the railway Reims–Longuyon–Thionville acquires increased importance. The Crown Prince of Saxony has been requested to arrange for its thorough destruction at points within his reach, and I respectfully suggest that you should also take steps to the same end.

At the same time I inform you that in the next few days a detachment will be assembled at Saarburg under the command of Major-Gen. v. Bothmer (hitherto commandant of the troops at Cöln), composed of

65th infantry regiment,
28th and 68th Landwehr regiments,
a reserve battery from Cöln,
4th reserve regiment hussars.

General Bothmer has instructions to expect his further orders from you. If you consider the mere *observation* of Thionville sufficient these troops may be employed before Metz; in that case the opinion held here is that the strengthening of the position on the left bank of the Moselle above Metz seems desirable.

201. Commercy, Aug. 24.

To all Officers commanding Armies and to the Detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

There have been cases of French surgeons released from hospitals being sent forward from the rear by a route leading through another army straight towards the enemy. On this we note that it will not do so to arrange the return to their armies, allowed to surgeons, &c., by the Geneva Convention, as to endanger the secrecy of our movements. These surgeons, &c., must accordingly be sent back either by a circuitous route, e.g. through neutral territory, or only at the beginning of a fresh stage of the operations. Their routes too must be laid out from one army only into the *rayon* of the next, not through the next army's *rayon*.

202. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 24.

To Officer commanding the Third Army, Ligny.

In reply to your favour of to-day your command is requested to communicate to the detachment of the Crown Prince of Saxony and to these head-quarters the password and countersign issued to your troops.

The detachment of His Royal Highness has been instructed that the password and countersign of the Third Army apply to it also.[1]

The reports received at the great head-quarters up to the evening of Aug. 24 concerning MacMahon's army announced its departure from Châlons for Reims, but left in doubt the purpose of this movement. Gen. v. Moltke therefore decided to give the further advance of the German armies a direction such as would admit either of a wheel in the direction of Reims, or the retention, without any important loss of time, of the direction, hitherto followed, towards Paris. For this purpose he drafted the following order, which however, in consequence of the news that came in during the night of Aug. 24–5, was not executed :

203. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 24, 7 p.m.

Since it has proved that Châlons too has been evacuated by the French, H.M. the King is willing to grant the troops a day of rest on the 26th or 27th at the points most favourable for them.

The columns must be closed up and as ample provisions as possible made available in order that the barren part of Champagne may afterwards be crossed without pause.

On Aug. 28 the advance-guards must stand on the line Suippes–Châlons–Coole or to the south of it.

In this advance the road Laheycourt–Outrivière Fme.–Poix–Châlons is assigned to the left wing column of the detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, the road Nettancourt–Possesse–Togny-aux-Bœufs to the right wing column of the Third Army.

The detachment will be quartered and will requisition to the right, the Third Army to the left of the named roads and in their neighbourhood (2 km.).

Circumstances will shortly decide whether and with what part of our forces a wheel towards Reims will be executed or the advance on Paris be continued with all our forces.

[1] Before Paris the great head-quarters gave out the password and countersign for the Third and Meuse Armies, and on and after Nov. 24, in consequence of the nearness of the several armies to one another, the password and countersign thus given out were the same for all the armies (i. e. also for the First and Second).

The cavalry must range forward as far as possible, that of the right wing reconnoitring to-morrow the country towards the Belgian border, observing Montmédy and Sedan as soon as possible, and next reconnoitring towards Reims, Rethel, Mézières, in which process the railway Reims–Laon must be interrupted.

204. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 24, 8 p.m.

Telegram to Officer commanding the Army before Metz.

Châlons evacuated by the enemy. We are continuing our march while securing our right wing.

The reports that came in to the great head-quarters during the night of Aug. 24–5 confirmed afresh the departure of the French Army from Châlons, and pointed to an intention on the part of the enemy, hitherto considered unlikely, of marching alongside the Belgian border to relieve Metz. But as this was not clear it was determined at great head-quarters at first only to turn a little more towards the north-west and to give increased emphasis to observation of the conditions on the right flank. For this purpose Gen. v. Moltke issued the following orders:

205. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 25, 11 a.m.

To the Officer commanding Third Army, Alliancelles, and to the Detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, Fleury.

All reports received here agree that the enemy has evacuated Châlons and marched off towards Reims.

H.M. the King orders the detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Third Army to follow this movement by continuing the advance in a north-westerly direction.

The former will move to-morrow with the XII corps to Vienne (advance-guards Autry and Servon), with the Guard corps to Ste.-Ménehould (advance-guards Vienne-la-Ville and towards Berzieux), with the IV corps to Villers-en-Argonne (advance-guard towards Dommartin). The cavalry must be pushed far on to reconnoitre the front and right flank, and in particular must reach Vouziers and Buzancy.

The Third Army will to-morrow push forward the heads of its columns to the line Givry-en-Argonne–Changy, north-east of Vitry, which place is to be observed.

Unless very special news comes in the armies will be given a day of rest on the 27th. In that case it must be used to bring up the provision columns and to regulate the food supplies so that

during the further advance the barren part of Champagne may be traversed without difficulty.

The great head-quarters of His Majesty the King will go to-morrow to Ste.-Ménehould. Reports until 10 a.m. to here.

As the left wing of the IV army corps came during the advance into close touch with the II Bavarian corps, and there were consequently disputes over billeting the troops in the villages, Gen. v. Alvensleben, commanding IV army corps, finding himself too distant from the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Saxony, applied directly to the chief of the general staff of the army, begging for his decision.

Gen. v. Moltke sent these complaints to the Bavarian corps with a letter.

206. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 25.

To Officer commanding the Royal II Bavarian Corps, Chaumont.

To the Royal Commander with the request to clear the line of march of the Royal Prussian IV army corps.

The army corps named marches to-morrow to Villers-en-Argonne, and to avoid further collisions the Royal Bavarian II army corps, which presumably will continue its march to Givry-en-Argonne, would have not to extend itself to the right further than the line Noyers–Sommeille–Le Châtelier.

207. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 25, 7 p.m.

Telegram to Officer commanding the Army before Metz, Doncourt.

Since the day before yesterday no news from you. Beg for telegraphic communication whether anything new. Written report on details of your position desired.

Gen. v. Stiehle replied that telegraphic reports had been sent daily, and that a *feldjäger* with detailed report was on his way.

Awaiting sure reports of the direction taken by the army of Châlons, Gen. v. Moltke utilized the time by drafting the following march table for the union of the Meuse Army, the two Bavarian corps of the Third Army, and two corps of the army investing Metz in the neighbourhood of Damvillers on the right bank of the Meuse, by which an advance of MacMahon upon Metz would be prevented.

208. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 25.

If this evening, the 25th, the news comes in that the turning movement began on the 23rd and has by now reached Vouziers :

Corps	26th	27th	28th	29th
XII	Varennes	Dun	in case, retreat to Damvillers	Marville Longuyon
Guard	Dombasle	Montfaucon	Damvillers	
IV	Fleury	West of Verdun	Damvillers	
III	—	Étain	Damvillers	
IX	—	Landres	Mangiennes	
Bavarians	Chaumont	Nixéville	Azannes	
,,	,,	Dombasle		

Seven army corps = 150,000 infantry.

The preceding draft was shortly to serve as the basis for the next movements of the German armies. For the same evening of the 25th of August further communications reached the great head-quarters —among others a telegram from London with report taken from the *Temps* of the 23rd of the sudden decision of MacMahon to hasten to Bazaine's help—which suggested the conjecture of the French Army's marching upon Vouziers. All doubts, it is true, were not yet removed; in particular there were as yet no reports from German cavalry of contact with the enemy; but it was important to act if the right moment for barring the way to MacMahon's army was not to be missed. Accordingly in the course of that very night all the preparatory orders were issued to be able to march off to the north on the 26th with the detachment and the two Bavarian corps, in case the cavalry sent on towards Vouziers and Buzancy should confirm the advance of the enemy in the direction of Metz.

209. Bar-le-Duc, Sept. 25, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding the Detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, Fleury.

A report just received makes it seem not improbable that Marshal MacMahon has determined to attempt the relief of the enemy's principal army invested in Metz. In that case he would have been on the march from Reims since the 23rd inst., and the heads of his columns may have reached Vouziers to-day.

In this case it becomes necessary to unite towards its right wing the detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony in such fashion that the XII corps marches to Varennes, while the Guard and IV corps move up to the road Varennes–Verdun.

Similarly the I and II Bavarian corps would have to follow this movement.

The start of these troops depends, however, on the reports which H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony will have received by now and of which the arrival here cannot be awaited.[1]

The Guard and IV corps have received orders from here in the first instance not to start on the march prescribed in their orders of to-day, but to finish their cooking and to await orders to march.

210. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 25, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding Guard Corps, Triaucourt, Officer commanding IV Army Corps, Laheycourt, and Officer commanding I[2] and II Royal Bavarian Army Corps, Chaumont.

The corps is not to start on the march which has been so far ordered for to-morrow, but is to finish its cooking and to await:

Guard Corps, IV corps } fresh orders from H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

I, II } Bavarian corps: further orders for marching.

On the morning of Aug. 26 also there was no definitive confirmation of the conjectured march of the French Army upon Metz, but that march seemed highly probable. Accordingly, at a meeting of the great head-quarters and the command of the Third Army at Bar-le-Duc it was suggested to the command of the Third Army that that army should at once begin its march to its right in so far as the following order, which had been issued meanwhile, admitted of that course:

211. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 26, 12 noon.

To Officers commanding IV, Guard, and I and II Bavarian Army Corps.

The reports received make probable the concentration of Marshal MacMahon's army at Vouziers.

His Majesty orders the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony and the I and II Royal Bavarian army corps to be set in march immediately in that direction.

The XII army corps and the 5th and 6th cavalry divisions are already on the move. The Guard corps is to march to Dombasle;

[1] To explain the view prevailing at the great head-quarters and the intentions consequent upon it, Lt.-Col. v. Verdy, of the General Staff, was sent in the night to Fleury.

[2] The command of the I Bavarian Army Corps was also quartered at Bar-le-Duc, and therefore received this order orally.

a battalion of the XII will remain at Clermont to guard the great head-quarters. The IV army corps will move to Fleury. The I Royal Bavarian corps will march to Erize-la-Petite, the II Royal Bavarian army corps to Triaucourt.

All the troops will start immediately after cooking, will supply themselves with provisions for three days, and will leave behind with sufficient escort the trains not immediately required.

The great head-quarters of H.M. the King will go this afternoon to Clermont.

The preceding order was sent to the commanders of the army detachment of the Crown Prince of Saxony and of the Third Army for their information, and with the following special explanations to the commander of the army before Metz:

212. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 26, 12 noon.

It is the intention to direct the XII corps to-morrow, the 27th, from Varennes through Dun across the Meuse; on the 28th the Guard and IV corps, followed by two Bavarian corps, will reach the neighbourhood of Damvillers. His Majesty orders that two army corps be detached from the army of investment and so directed as also without fail to reach the neighbourhood of Damvillers–Mangiennes on the 28th, for which purpose they probably need not start till the 27th.

It is suggested to Your Royal Highness that the arrangements be so made that, even if the investment has to be temporarily abandoned on the right bank, the enemy may at any rate be prevented from breaking through to the west.

The 5th, 6th, and 12th cavalry divisions, pushed forward to-day towards Vouziers, will bring sure information concerning the conditions in that quarter.

Telegraphic communication with the great head-quarters will be established to-day as far as Erize-la-Petite (fork of the roads Clermont–Bar-le-Duc and Clermont–St.-Mihiel).

A line of relays must be posted from there.

The following order was issued for the corps of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, of which the heads of the columns reached Homburg–Neunkirchen on Aug. 26:

213. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 26, 10 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO THE GRAND DUKE OF MECKLENBURG-SCHWERIN, SAARBRÜCKEN.

The corps is at once to begin its march, in tactical echelons, towards Metz, and is to receive its orders from General Steinmetz,

head-quarters Jouy-aux-Arches at Ars-sur-Moselle. Acknowledge this order by telegram to here.[1]

To secure the railway communications to the rear the chief of the Field Railway Service was furnished with the following instructions :

214. Bar-le-Duc, Aug. 26, 11.30 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO DIRECTOR WEISHAUPT,[2] PONT-À-MOUSSON OR NANCY RAILWAY STATION.

Prospects for Toul improving. Vitry is ours. Restoration this side of Toul, more and more important, is to be pushed on as fast as possible. We go to-day to Clermont. Railway station Bar-le-Duc roomy and fully preserved. General Stoech gives full powers for clearing stoppages in rear.

In the afternoon of the 26th the great head-quarters went to Clermont. As meanwhile telegraphic communication had been set in working order between the head-quarters of Prince Frederick Charles (Doncourt) and the great head-quarters (cp. No. 212) as far as Erize-la-Petite, General v. Moltke was able that same evening to send off the following order by relays and telegraph :

215. Clermont, Aug. 26, 7 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE METZ, DONCOURT.

Great head-quarters are at Clermont. Orders by *feldjäger* on the way.[3] The prescribed movement of troops is not to start before Saturday.[4] By then shall probably have fuller information. Report receipt by wire.

In the course of the evening reports at last came in from the cavalry of the army detachment ; enemy troops of all arms had been met at Grandpré, but had not yet reached the Meuse. It thus became almost certain that MacMahon was marching on Metz. Accordingly General v. Moltke, by order of H.M. the King, gave oral orders at 11 p.m. to General v. Schlotheim, chief of the general staff of the army detachment, of which the head-quarters were also at Clermont, to continue next day the movement on Damvillers, to occupy the crossings of the Meuse at Dun and Stenay, and with the cavalry to move against the enemy's right flank. The following written orders were issued :

[1] Prince Frederick Charles and Gen. v. Steinmetz were duly informed of this.
[2] Director in the Ministry of Trade.
[3] See No. 212.
[4] Aug. 27.

216. Clermont, Aug. 26, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding Royal Bavarian I Army Corps.

H.M. the King orders the I Royal Bavarian army corps to march to-morrow (Saturday) to Nixéville, but not to start till 11 a.m. after cooking. The corps must protect itself against Verdun.

217. Clermont, Aug. 26, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding Royal Bavarian II Army Corps.

H.M. the King orders the II Royal Bavarian corps to march to-morrow to Dombasle.

218. Clermont, Aug. 26, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding Third Army.

The cavalry pushed forward towards the north has confirmed the presence of enemy troops of all arms at Grandpré.

His Majesty has ordered the XII, IV, and Guard corps to continue their march in the direction of Damvillers. The I Bavarian corps is to march to-morrow (Saturday) to Nixéville, the II to Dombasle.

The Prussian corps of the Third Army (including the Württemberg division) are to continue their march in the direction of Ste.-Ménehould. The 6th and 5th cavalry divisions now at Somme-Py and Autry are ordered to follow the enemy to Grandpré and Vouziers.

219. Clermont, Aug. 26, 11 p.m.

Telegram [1] to Officer commanding the Army before Metz, Doncourt.

Enemy troops of all arms at Grandpré. According to written order [2] two corps of your army are to move off to-morrow (Saturday) to Damvillers and to reach there on Sunday, 28th.

The remarkably slow advance of the French Army, which on the evening of Aug. 26 had not gone further with the heads of its infantry columns than Grandpré–Buzancy–Le Chesne, made it possible to overtake the enemy's forces while still on the left bank of the Meuse and to bring them to a stand. The concentration at Damvillers could therefore be given up, and the advance of the German army corps was now continued in the direction of Vouziers, Buzancy, and Beaumont. In this movement the co-operation of

[1] By relays to Erize-la-Petite, then on by telegraph. Copy on 28th, a.m., by *feldjäger*.

[2] No. 212.

parts of the army investing Metz seemed needless. The orders issued from these points of view on Aug. 27 were :

220. Clermont, Aug. 27, 8 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE METZ, DONCOURT.

A large part of the enemy's forces was yesterday evening, according to report just received, still at Vouziers. The movement of troops enjoined upon Your Royal Highness need therefore not be begun until further orders. A line of relays must be laid as far as Étain : from there a connexion will be arranged from here. Wire reply at once.

221. Clermont, Aug. 27, 8 a.m.

TO H.R.H. THE CROWN PRINCE OF SAXONY.

Prince Frederick Charles is posting a line of relays from Doncourt to Étain. Your Royal Highness will arrange for its prolongation from Étain to here.

222. Clermont, Aug. 27, 8 a.m.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING ROYAL BAVARIAN II ARMY CORPS.

The Royal II Bavarian army corps is to direct an infantry brigade to-day to Clermont, where it must remain.

223. Clermont, Aug. 27, 7.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE METZ, DONCOURT. BY RELAYS TO ERIZE-LA-PETITE.

As sufficient forces are now assembled here none are to be sent by you. Acknowledge receipt by wire.

224. Clermont, Aug. 27, 7.30 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THIRD ARMY, REVIGNY-AUX-VACHES.

Third Army must if possible reach Malmy and Laval with the heads of its Prussian corps on the 28th. Written order follows.

225. Clermont, Aug. 27, 7.30 p.m.

TO OFFICERS COMMANDING THE ARMY DETACHMENT OF H.R.H. THE CROWN PRINCE OF SAXONY AND THE THIRD ARMY.[1]

According to reports received the main forces of the army of

[1] To the former by an orderly officer ; to the Third Army sent open to the V corps to be forwarded ; also a copy by orderly to both Bavarian corps, to the II with the note ' one battalion to stay at Clermont '.

MacMahon are still at Vouziers; strong cavalry had been pushed on to Beaumont and Buzancy.

H.M. the King orders the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Third Army to continue their advance in that direction.

The first-named army detachment and the two Bavarian corps are to follow the ordered march table,[1] which in the existing conditions had to be settled in detail here, and the two Bavarian corps have received their orders accordingly.

The Third Army (V, VI, XI corps, and Württemberg division) must as far as possible reach the line Malmy–Laval with the heads of its columns on the 28th and the line Séchault–Somme-Py on the 29th, and must close up.

The 5th and 6th cavalry divisions (Autry and Monthois) will for the next few days receive their instructions from the commander of the Third Army, but must also report direct to these headquarters.

226. MARCH TABLE FOR AUG. 28 AND 29.

	28.	29.
II Bavarian corps	Vienne[2] and behind	Grandpré
I ,, ,,	Varennes and behind	
Guard corps .	Banthéville	Buzancy
XII corps halts at	Dun	Nouart
IV corps . .	Montfaucon	Banthéville

227. No date. Apparently Aug. 28.

DRAFT OF A MARCH TABLE FOR AUG. 29 AND 30.

	29.	30.
XII corps . . .	Buzancy–Nouart	Ballay
Guard corps by Rémonville and Landres	Thenorgues / Champigneulles	Longwé
IV corps	St.-Juvin	Falaise
I Bavarian corps . .	Autry	Savigny-s.-Aisne
II ,, ,, . .	Servon–Séchault	

228. Clermont, Aug. 28.

DRAFT FOR AN ATTACK ON VOUZIERS.

One to two enemy army corps were yesterday evening at Vouziers. It is probable that the rest of his forces are at Le Chesne.

[1] See No. 226.

[2] Marginal note: This corps from Dombasle to Clermont must take the road by Brabant-en-Argonne and Vraincourt.

Against these, in attacking Vouziers, our right flank must be protected. Available for this:

XII corps . .	Buzancy,
Guard corps . .	Thenorgues,
IV corps . .	Grandpré,

whence this latter if necessary can advance to Briquenay (3 miles, high road). But, if regard for the security of our flank permit, these three corps support the attack on Vouziers, with a division each upon Ballay, Longwé, and Falaise.

For the direct attack on Vouziers are destined:

Bavarian II corps	Termes against Falaise.
Bavarian I corps .	by Châtel–Autry } to Chambre aux
V corps . .	by Monthois } Loups.

From the course of the action it will be seen whether it is desirable to bring up the XI corps too for the direct attack or to cut off the enemy's retreat to Reims with our VI corps.

The reports received at great head-quarters on Aug. 28 until 7 p.m. compelled the assumption that the enemy was marching off to the north. This occasioned the following orders:

229. Clermont, Aug. 28, 7 p.m.

To Officer commanding Third Army and Officer commanding the Army Detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

The enemy this morning evacuated Vouziers and marched away towards the north. But it is uncertain whether he means to concentrate towards Le Chesne or towards Rethel.

His Majesty orders the march to be continued as follows:

The XII corps to march to-morrow towards Nouart; one brigade to remain at Stenay.

The Guard corps moves towards Buzancy.

The IV army corps follows to Rémonville.

H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony will also consider the possibility of a hostile attack from Le Chesne, and with this regard will have the ground south of Nouart and Buzancy reconnoitred.

The I Bavarian corps will move to Champigneulles, the II to Grandpré; both corps being there ready to support H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

The three Prussian corps of the Third Army (including Württemberg division) will move further forward in the direction of Vouziers

and to the west of that place. A cavalry division of the Third Army is to be sent towards Reims.

The great head-quarters of H.M. the King will go to-morrow to Grandpré.

Reports till 8 a.m. to here.

Addition for the Third Army:

The I Royal Bavarian corps has received direct orders from here.

230. Clermont, Aug. 28, 7 p.m.

To Officer commanding the Army Detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, Malancourt.

In reply to your letter of to-day [1] your royal command is informed that the commander of the army before Metz was instructed last night to recall the III and the II army corps to Metz. Accordingly the support of these corps cannot be counted upon for to-morrow.

As may be seen from to-day's army orders, it has not yet been practicable to cause an exchange of positions between IV and the Guard corps, but this will be kept in view.

But at 9 p.m. fresh reports came in to great head-quarters, according to which the enemy had not retired to the north but was beyond doubt continuing his march to the east. The changed orders of General v. Moltke thus conditioned were:

231. Clermont, Aug. 28, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding Third Army and Officer commanding the Army Detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

The appearance of strong bodies of the enemy's infantry at Bar near Buzancy suggests that the enemy means to try to deblockade Metz. It is to be assumed that one or two corps are following for this purpose the road Vouziers–Buzancy–Stenay, while the rest of the army is marching to the north by Beaumont.

In order not to challenge the enemy to an attack before sufficient forces have been assembled it is suggested to H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony first of all early to collect the XII, Guard, and IV corps in a defensive position about the line Landres–Aincreville.

[1] The officer commanding had begged for orders whether the III army corps, set in march to Damvillers from the line investing Metz, was put under the command of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, and at the same time had expressed the wish that, instead of the Guard corps, the IV corps, which was numerically considerably stronger, might move into the first line, and the Guard corps follow in the second line.

The line Dun–Stenay remains to be watched by the detached brigade.

Both Bavarian corps must start at 5 a.m. The I, which will receive direct orders from here, will march through Fléville to Sommerance, where it must arrive at 10 a.m. The II corps moves through Binarville, Châtel, Cornay, to St.-Juvin.

The V army corps will march by Bouconville, Montcheutin, Senuc, to Grandpré.

A further offensive against the road Vouziers–Buzancy–Stenay is reserved.

The remaining two corps of the Third Army are to be so directed as to be able in case of need to be brought up on the 30th to the decisive battle.

H.M. the King will move at 9 a.m. first of all to Varennes.

Autograph addition of General v. Moltke for the army detachment of the Meuse :

An advance at once at the beginning to seize the road Buzancy from weaker enemy forces is not excluded by the above orders.

232. Clermont, Aug. 28, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding Royal Bavarian I Army Corps, Varennes.

The corps must start at 5 a.m. and march by Fléville to Sommerance, where it will first of all deploy behind left wing at Landres of the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

The II Bavarian corps will be brought up by Cornay to St.-Juvin, while the V Prussian corps will debouch by Grandpré.

H.M. the King proceeds at 9 a.m. to Varennes.

The corps must establish a line of relays from Varennes to Clermont and from Varennes to Grandpré.

On the way from Clermont by Varennes to Grandpré during the 29th of August General v. Moltke sent direct [1] to the leading corps of the Third Army the following orders partly altering their instructions :

233. Fléville,[2] Aug. 29, 11.30 a.m.

To Officer commanding Royal Bavarian I Army Corps.

The 1st division of the Royal Bavarian I corps may bivouac at St.-Juvin, as probably to-morrow the operations will be towards the

[1] The VI army corps, which had been set in march from Ste.-Ménehould to Varennes, received *en route* from Capt. Zingler, of the general staff of the great head-quarters, His Majesty's order to turn off to Vienne-le-Château and there bivouacked.

[2] Between Varennes and Grandpré.

west. It must send a battalion to Grandpré to the King's head quarters.

234. Fléville, Aug. 29, 11.30 a.m.

To Officer commanding Royal Bavarian II Corps.

The Royal Bavarian II corps is to bivouac on the left bank of the Aire at Cornay and Chevières.

235. Grandpré, Aug. 29, 12.30 p.m.

To Officer commanding V Army Corps.

The V army corps is to halt at Grandpré and to bivouac there. The 9th division has been informed of this from here.

The reports which came in to Grandpré from the cavalry by the evening of Aug. 29, in connexion with the observations made by Lt.-Cols. v. Brandenstein and v. Bronsart of the general staff of great head-quarters, who had been sent forward to reconnoitre, led decidedly to the conclusion that the enemy was advancing north-eastwards towards the Meuse, and that his main forces might be assumed to be between Le Chesne and Beaumont with strong flank parties further to the south. The papers of a French staff officer taken in the morning at Buzancy with orders for Aug. 29 contributed to confirm this view. H.M. the King therefore decided to attack the enemy next day with both armies before he reached the Meuse, but at the same time to threaten his lines of communication leading to the west.

236. Grandpré, Aug. 29, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding Third Army, Senuc, and Officer commanding Army Detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, Bayonville.

All the reports that have come in to-day agree that the enemy's army will be to-morrow morning with its main forces between Beaumont and Le Chesne or south of this line.

His Majesty orders the attack on the enemy. To the right the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony is to move forward at 10 a.m. across the line Beauclair–Fossé in the direction of Beaumont. The roads east of the high road Buzancy–Beaumont are at its disposal. The Guard corps, which must first of all be put into reserve, must have cleared that road by 8 a.m.

The Third Army must start early and move with its right wing by Buzancy on Beaumont, and must be ready to support the attack of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony with two army corps, while

the other corps are at first to keep rather to the direction towards Le Chesne.

A battalion of the Third Army is to keep Grandpré occupied.

H.M. the King will proceed from here to Buzancy at 10 a.m.

On the evening after the battle of Beaumont the following orders were issued :

237. Height of Sommauthe, Aug. 30, 6 p.m.

To H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, Beaumont, and to H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Prussia, at St.-Pierremont.

His Majesty's head-quarters are coming to Buzancy It is requested that the positions of the corps may be reported as soon as they can be ascertained.

238. Buzancy, Aug. 30, 11 p.m.

To Officer commanding Third Army, St.-Pierremont, and to H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony, Beaumont.

Although until now no report has come in showing at what spot the fighting of the several corps ended, it is clear that the enemy everywhere retreated or was beaten.

The forward movement is therefore to be continued to-morrow as early as possible, and the enemy to be vigorously attacked wherever he stands this side of the Meuse and to be squeezed into the narrowest possible space between that river and the Belgian frontier.

The army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony has the special task of preventing the enemy's left wing from escaping to the east. For this purpose it is advisable that, if possible, two corps should push forward on the right bank of the Meuse and attack in flank and rear any enemy posted opposite Mouzon.

In the same way the Third Army is to deal with the enemy's front and right flank. Artillery positions as strong as possible are to be taken on this bank so as to disturb the marching and encamping of enemy columns in the valley plain of the right bank from Mouzon downwards.

If the enemy should pass on to Belgian territory without being at once disarmed he must be pursued thither without more ado.

H.M. the King will proceed at 8.30 a.m. from here to Sommauthe.

The dispositions issued by army commanders are until that time to be sent here.

Postscript.

To Officer commanding Third Army :

The IV corps, after having, in conjunction with the XII corps, driven back the enemy to Mouzon, stands with its outposts on the

north edge of the Bois Girodeau,[1] and main body north of Beaumont. Guard corps south of Beaumont, XII corps at Létanne, Pouilly (on the Meuse) occupied. IV corps has taken 11 guns and 2,000 prisoners, two great ammunition parks, and the camp of a division.

To the Crown Prince of Saxony :

According to report just received these stand :

VI army corps at Vouziers ;
XI and Württembergers, Stonne ;
V, La Besace ;
I Bavarian corps, probably Raucourt ;
II Bavarian corps, head at Sommauthe.

239. Buzancy, Aug. 30, 11.30 p.m.

To Officer commanding Third Army, St.-Pierremont.

His Majesty observed with displeasure that the II Bavarian army corps, which according to army orders was to follow the I directly as reserve, was not deployed one mile behind it at Sommauthe, but was found in column of march after 9 p.m. with its rear at Buzancy. The corps would therefore have been in no position to give support if support had been required.

Besides, the corps by the change it made impeded the bringing up of the supply columns of the other corps and without need reached its bivouac by a night march.

The commander of the army before Metz was informed of the events of the last few days and of the intentions cherished, and was furnished with corresponding instructions.

240. Buzancy, Aug. 31, 8 a.m.

To Officer commanding the Army before Metz, Malancourt.

I have the honour respectfully to communicate to Your Royal Highness the following :

It having been ascertained during the last few days that the army of Marshal MacMahon was moving in the area between Meuse and Aisne, the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Third Army were pushed forward towards the road Beaumont–Le Chesne.

Yesterday strong bodies of enemy troops were found at Beaumont and Stonne. At the first point the corps Failly was attacked by the IV and XII army corps and driven back through Mouzon with great loss (11 guns and 2,000 prisoners, two large artillery parks,

[1] On the latest French staff map, Bois Givédeau.

reported and confirmed yesterday evening). Mouzon was taken by the IV army corps yesterday evening.

The enemy's army corps at Stonne escaped a disaster by a timely retreat through Raucourt to Sedan. Its rearguard only was attacked and beaten in the afternoon by troops of the I Bavarian corps.

The advance continues to-day.

The XII and Guard corps, which bivouacked near Beaumont, cross at 6 a.m. at Létanne and Pouilly to the right bank of the Meuse and move upon Douzy and Carignan–Sachy. The IV corps is following through Mouzon.

The Third Army is also moving up to or, if required, across the Meuse along the length Mézières–Remilly.

The intention is to confine the enemy's army to as small as possible a space between the Meuse and the Belgian frontier, or even to throw it into Belgium, whither our armies will follow it, unless it is immediately disarmed.

It is not impossible that isolated parts of the enemy's army after yesterday's battle threw themselves from Mouzon towards the east; your royal command will direct its attention to this, and will now the more decidedly maintain the closest investment of Metz.

241. Sommauthe,[1] Aug. 31, 11 a.m.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE METZ, MALANCOURT.

Enemy yesterday thrown back from Beaumont through Mouzon. Possible that separate parties have turned eastwards through Carignan; they should be observed. Security of magazine at Étain to be considered. General attack continued to-day.

242. Vendresse, Aug. 31, 10 p.m.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE METZ, MALANCOURT.

In continuation of my letter of to-day I respectfully inform your royal command that the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Third Army have continued their advance to-day with good results.

As is now clear, the result of yesterday's conflict is considerably greater than was at first supposed. The corps of Failly and Douay

[1] H.M. the King had proceeded at 8.30 a.m., accompanied by the general staff, from Buzancy to the height of Sommauthe, and in the afternoon by Beaumont, Raucourt, and Chémery to Vendresse.

and a part of that of Lebrun seem to be quite dissolved. Over twenty guns and several thousand prisoners have been taken. To-day the heads of our columns have reached the Meuse at several points, and some have even crossed it. The enemy's army is trying to march off on the right bank from Sedan to Mézières. A thrust forward through Donchery, which is already in our possession, will begin very early in the morning. Dismounted hussars and Ulans of the 4th cavalry division have cleared the villages of Frénois and Wadelincourt of enemy infantry.

In these conditions a serious disturbance of the army before Metz by parts of the army of MacMahon does not seem probable.

But it would greatly serve the interests of the armies here united if the fortress of Verdun were to be completely invested by troops under your royal command. Forces of yours would the sooner be available for that purpose inasmuch as meantime the heads of the corps under the command of H.R.H. the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg will have arrived before Metz.

The further details are respectfully entrusted to your royal command.

An army order for Sept. 1 was not issued from the great head-quarters as the orders issued in the evening of Aug. 30 (cp. No. 238) contained the general points of view for the conduct of both armies, and in particular, with regard to the next movements of theT hird Army, all that was necessary had been agreed upon between Generals v. Moltke, v. Podbielski, and v. Blumenthal on Aug. 31, at the head-quarters of the Third Army, Chémery, during the passage of the great head-quarters from Sommauthe to Vendresse (cp. note to No. 241). However, the observations made by Lt.-Col. v. Brandenstein, chief of department in the general staff of the great head-quarters, on the morning of Aug. 31 occasioned a letter from General v. Moltke to the chief of the staff of the Third Army :

243. Vendresse, Aug. 31, 7.45 p.m.

To Lt.-Gen. v. Blumenthal, Chémery.

Lt.-Col. v. Brandenstein, just returned from Remilly, confirms that the French have marched off westwards leaving all baggage behind, and will perhaps continue this march through the night. By that means the attainment of a great result might be frustrated. Your Excellency will consider whether it might not be practicable to cross the Meuse in the night with the XI corps and the Württemberg division, so that the attack may be made in the morning at dawn on a deployed front in the direction of the road Sedan–Mézières.

During the battle of Sedan written orders had not been needed. But the opening of negotiations occasioned the following army order :

244. On the height before Sedan, Sept. 1, 7.15 p.m.

To Officer commanding Third Army and to H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

Negotiations have been opened ; accordingly attacks may not be made by our side during the night. But any attempt of the enemy to break through our line must be repelled by force. If the negotiations do not lead to a conclusion, hostilities will begin again, but only after communication from here. As such the opening of artillery fire from the height east of Frénois may be taken.

245. Frénois, Sept. 1, 7.15 p.m.

Telegram to H.R.H. Prince Frederick Charles, Malancourt.

French army to-day attacked from all sides before Sedan and completely beaten. About 20,000 prisoners, many guns and eagles taken. Napoleon in Sedan has offered the King his sword. Negotiations for capitulation in progress.

Suggested on basis of this to summon Marshal Bazaine.

246. The following agreement has been concluded between undersigned Chief of the General Staff of His Majesty the King of Prussia, Commander-in-Chief of the German Army, and the Commander of the French Army, both plenipotentiaries of King William and the Emperor Napoleon.

Article I. The French Army under the command of General v. Wimpffen, which is at this moment surrounded by superior forces at Sedan, becomes prisoners of war.

Article 2. Out of regard for the brave resistance of this army all generals and officers and higher officials with the rank of officers are excepted who pledge themselves on their word of honour in writing not to take arms against Germany until the end of the present war, and in no way to act contrary to the interests of Germany. The officers and officials who accept this condition are to retain their arms and their private property.

Article 3. All the other arms and all military material, e. g. colours, eagles and standards, guns, horses, military chests, army wagons, ammunition, &c., will be handed over in Sedan to a military official appointed by the French Commander in order to be at once transferred by that official to the German plenipotentiaries.

Article 4. The fortress of Sedan will then be delivered to H.M. the King of Prussia in its present condition, and not later than the evening of Sept. 2.

Article 5. Those officers who do not take the pledge named in Article 2 and the disarmed men will be led off by regiments and in military order. This measure will begin on Sept. 2 and must be ended on Sept. 3. The parties will be brought on to the ground at Iges, surrounded by the Meuse, in order to be delivered by their officers to the German plenipotentiaries, who will then give the orders to the non-commissioned officers.

Article 6. The military surgeons without exception remain behind in order to take charge of the wounded.

Done at Frénois, Sept. 2, 1870.

(Signed) v. Moltke. (Signed) v. Wimpffen.

247. Frénois, Sept. 2, 12 noon.

To Officer commanding Third Army and to H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony.

The French Army which is to-day still in and about Sedan has capitulated. Officers are let go on parole. Non-commissioned officers and men are prisoners of war. Arms and army *matériel* are to be given up. The text of the convention is annexed.

The prisoners, whose numbers cannot yet be estimated, are to be assembled in the bend of the Meuse at Villette and Iges and then led off in echelons. Their first guards are to be the XI and I Royal Bavarian corps, both under the orders of General v. d. Tann.

The food supply of the prisoners, for which, according to the promise of the French commanding generals, provisions will be brought by rail from Mézières to near Donchery, is also to be arranged by General v. d. Tann. Great care must be taken to see that no difficulties are put in the way of bringing up the train.

In the course of to-morrow, after Sedan has been evacuated by the French troops, an infantry regiment of the XI corps must be placed in the fortress as garrison.

The Third Army and the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony must move away to-morrow from Sedan to the west and south, the road Remilly–La Besace–Le Chesne being given as a western limit of the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony. Trains of the Royal Bavarian army corps must clear this road in good time.

The removal of the prisoners on two lines by Stenay–Étain–Gorze to Remilly and by Buzancy–Clermont–St.-Mihiel to Pont-à-Mousson

is to be prepared by the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony and by the royal command of the Third Army.

In order to meet any doubt, it is noted that the French officers taken yesterday in action and to-day before the conclusion of the capitulation till 11 a.m. are to be treated according to the principles hitherto adopted.

The Third Army must at once appoint a commandant of Sedan and a general to take over the weapons, &c., to be deposited in Sedan. Sufficient officers and officials must be given to these generals, both of whom must report themselves as soon as possible to the Quartermaster-General of the Army.

The horses to be surrendered by the French Army are by His Majesty's decision to benefit all the German mobile forces, and the army commands will be informed of the quotas to be handed to them.

The clearing of the battle-field is the business of the Inspectorate-General of *Etappen* of the army detachment of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Saxony. The burial of the corpses is to be hastened by requisitioning the civil authorities.

248. Frésnois, Sept. 2, 12 noon.

TELEGRAM TO OFFICER COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE METZ, MALANCOURT.

Capitulation of MacMahon's army signed. Army prisoners of war. To-day transport of prisoners begins on two lines with the stages Stenay–Étain–Gorze–Remilly and Buzancy–Clermont–St.-Mihiel–Pont-à-Mousson.

Daily echelons of 10,000 men each on either line; first echelons arrive on 5th at the rail-ends for departure. The army before Metz to take over the transports at Étain on Sept. 3 and at Pont-à-Mousson on Sept. 5, to feed them and transport them onwards. In case of delays in railway transport the echelons are to continue marching along the railway line.

249. Donchery, Sept. 2, 6 p.m.

TO OFFICER COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE METZ, MALANCOURT.

Your royal command is hereby informed, in supplement to the telegram sent to-day, that the army which was united under the command of Marshal MacMahon, after being driven back yesterday under the walls of Sedan in a bloody battle, has to-day surrendered.

A copy of the protocol of surrender, signed by General v. Wimpffen,

entrusted with the command after the wounding of Marshal MacMahon, is annexed. The Emperor Napoleon is a prisoner and proceeds to-morrow through Belgian territory to Cassel. To-day he had a conversation with H.M. the King.

For your royal command the forwarding of the numerous prisoners will shortly be important. They will be directed to Remilly and Pont-à-Mousson in daily transports of 10,000 in échelons of 2,000 men each. They will be escorted to Étain and Pont-à-Mousson by detachments of the army corps assembled here. At the points named the task of escorting them will be taken over by troops told off by you, at Étain on Sept. 3, and at Pont-à-Mousson on Sept. 5.

In present conditions it seems desirable in the enemy's territory to tell off a proportionately strong escort.

Your royal command will also arrange for an infantry regiment of the XI army corps, destined at first as garrison of Sedan, to be relieved as soon as possible by a combined Landwehr regiment (four battalions) of the 2nd Landwehr division, and further, that, so long as the removal of the army *matériel* taken at Sedan continues, the line of communication to Sedan may be continuously strongly held.

Whether shortly the attempt should be made to summon the army invested in Metz and the fortress of Verdun to surrender, basing the demand on the events at Sedan, is respectfully submitted to the judgement of your royal command.

250. Donchery, Sept. 2.

To Officer commanding Third Army, Donchery.

The royal commander is requested to be so kind as to inform these head-quarters how far the situation at Toul has developed, and whether we may count on an early surrender of this fortress.

251. Vendresse, Sept. 4, 4 a.m.

To Major-Gen. v. Bernhardi,[1] Sedan.

As according to a communication from the royal commander of the Third Army some doubts have arisen with reference to the execution of the capitulation, the following explanations are given you :

1. Those French officers who have given their word of honour in writing not to serve the French Government again during this war in a military capacity, nor to act at all against the interests of Germany, may proceed (if they wish, through Belgium) to such places in France as they choose ; they are to retain their swords,

[1] Commandant of Sedan.

their luggage, carriages, and such horses as are their own property.

They are allowed to take with them the servants absolutely necessary for their persons and their horses.

2. Those officers who do not agree to sign the document described are to be transported as prisoners of war to Germany (of course not through Belgium); their arms and horses to be taken from them, but their luggage to be left them.

3. The Commanding General v. Wimpffen is an exception; it has been already allowed that he, with four officers of his suite, may proceed through Belgium to Stuttgart, taking with them their own carriages and horses. The document treating of this must have already been brought to your knowledge. In the document which these officers are to sign guaranteeing their due arrival it must be expressly noted that they are to proceed to Stuttgart and there to report themselves to the Royal Württemberg Minister of War, who will be informed from here.

4. There are to be no further exceptions.

All officers are to be allowed to keep with them the men required for their service.

252. Rethel, Sept. 4, 6 p.m.

TELEGRAM TO LT.-GEN. V. WERDER, MUNDOLSHEIM, NEAR STRASSBURG.

MacMahon's army has capitulated after a bloody battle at Sedan. The Emperor Napoleon is going to Cassel as a prisoner of war. Attempts of Bazaine's army to break out from Metz have been beaten back.

On the basis of these facts summon Strassburg to surrender. Great head-quarters from to-morrow on at Reims.

253. Rethel, Sept. 5.

TO MAJOR-GEN. V. STIEHLE.

Your last letter to the King, my dear Stiehle, of the 3rd inst., has made clear to us the situation at this moment before Metz; but it was sent off evidently before you had received the telegraphic and written communication from here concerning the great success at Sedan. By that success the situation of the army which you are investing is materially affected.

It is of great importance that General Manteuffel has so manfully beaten back the enemy's attack, and also that future attempts to break through should be beaten, attempts which as you suppose will

probably be directed towards the south. No doubt Bazaine would have far superior forces at his heels, but still there would be fresh chances and the new campaign would take another shape and be prolonged.

You now have the text of the capitulation of MacMahon's army, and I may add that His Majesty would entirely approve of similar conditions for Bazaine. Only Metz, the fortress, must fall with the army in order that we may not have to conduct another long and difficult siege.

The greatness of the result to be obtained justifies the employment of now certainly 250,000 men, and however little the office of turnkey appeals to the military sense of your Prince, and even of the troops, this self-denial must be exacted.

In the battle itself on Sept. 1 between 20,000 and 30,000 prisoners were taken; how great the number of those who capitulated in Sedan we do not yet know. If those in Metz are added 200,000 prisoners will certainly be an embarrassment. Marsal would by no means suffice as a quarantine station, and the only course left us would be to retain the sick for a time on French soil.

I would also propose to let all who speak German go to their homes in Lorraine and Alsace. This would at the same time announce our firm resolve never again to part with these two provinces.

Now that every prospect of relief has been taken away from the army in Metz, the important thing is to make its stay there still more disagreeable, and for that purpose one means is to disturb it every night. I think this can be done as well with field guns as with 12-pounders, and is possible at very great ranges if only you can see the enemy's camps or find their distance exactly. Even against the town—a target you cannot miss—the 6-pounder with the same charge and loading as the 12-pounder will do. Perhaps also with pick and spade you can increase the difficulty for the enemy of breaking through in face of the advantage of the defensive on which you lay stress.

But you should allow an officer from the fortress to look round at Sedan in order to convince himself of the helplessness of the position.

If another attempt to break through should be made and frustrated there is nothing in the world left but unconditional surrender.

If after the arrival of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg you think you could do without a brigade I for my part would rather see it equipped with 24-pounders before Toul than before Verdun. The latter place is, it is true, inconvenient for the moment, but will

lose all real value when we advance further, while the value of the one railway rises higher and higher.

On the subject of Toul orders enough have been issued, but the business has so far not progressed and must be taken seriously in hand.

The railway line Frouard–Châlons is specially valuable for you too, as it will, as far as can be foreseen, be your next line of operations.

We are going to-day to Reims, where we must await the arrival of the army corps.

The breakneck operation of MacMahon for the relief of Metz involved a sudden right turn for the whole army; the battue at Sedan a complete right wheel. So when we had to right-about turn for Paris the Crown Prince of Saxony was on the left wing and our Crown Prince on the right. As a crossing of the lines of supply would cause great confusion we are at the moment engaged in a countermarch—Crown Prince of Saxony to the line Laon-Craonne–Cormicy, Crown Prince of Prussia Reims–Épernay–Vertus—which cannot be ended before the middle of the month. The XI and I Bavarian corps have remained about Sedan in order to carry out the evacuation ; I hope they will follow us in a few days. Of Paris we have as yet no news. A revolution is inevitable since the Emperor has left French soil. Bazaine is one of his creatures and has perhaps more particular regards to consider than the interests of France.

By the early morning of Sept. 1 every issue except that to Belgium was barred to the enemy. With every step forward of our troops the fiery embrace grew closer, and in the afternoon the connexion of the left with the right wing, of the XI with the Guard corps, was effected, the last escape prevented ; after obstinate resistance the French were driven down from the last height to the town. Our artillery fought the battle almost alone. Towards evening a short bombardment by about eighty guns was directed against Sedan, and soon afterwards appeared, with Lt.-Col. v. Bronsart, who had been sent into the fortress, the bearer of an imperial autograph : 'N'ayant pas été assez heureux de tomber à la tête de mes troupes, je remets mon épée à Votre Majesté.' The King received Gen. Reille, who stood there with bowed head, before his whole staff very formally, and replied that he accepted the sword of his antagonist and granted the interview asked for. It seems that in Sedan the Emperor was not sure of his life, for very early on Sept. 2, before the conclusion of a capitulation, he went to a farm-house before Donchery within the Württemberg outposts.

I found him in a wretched room *en grande tenue*. During the night the plenipotentiary negotiators had been informed that no other condition would be accorded than that the whole army should lay down its arms, and that unless an agreement was reached by 10 a.m. the hostilities would be renewed. A draft prepared and translated during the night, after I had just read it again to His Majesty, was signed without further objection, whereupon the King paid his call on the monarch, who had meanwhile been taken to the castle of Frénois. At 3 a.m., in pouring rain, Napoleon then drove with a numerous retinue and much baggage to the border, escorted by the body-squadron of the 1st Hussars, which looked splendid, to Bouillon. Can he have sacrificed 80,000 men to secure this retreat ?

MARCH TABLE (see p. 35 note)

	Day of Mobilization.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.
			Stationed at			Reconnoitres to the front			
Second Army	Cavalry Corps		Bildstock	Saarbrücken	St.-Avold	Falkenberg	Han a/d Nied	Nomény	The Second Army reaches Lunéville–Nancy or Pont-à-Mousson, or has rest-day to allow the other armies to close up.'
	III Army Corps: 5th Div.		Bildstock		Forbach	St.-Avold	Falkenberg		
	III Army Corps: 6th Div.		Neunkirchen		St.-Ingbert	Forbach	St.-Avold	Han a/d Nied	
	Guard Corps		Homburg		Saargemünd	Diefenbach	Mörchingen	Château-Salins	
	IV Army Corps		St.-Ingbert		Rohrbach	Saarunion	Rohrbach	Noyenvic	
	X Army Corps		Zweibrücken				Kuttingen		
Fourth Army	IX Army Corps		Cusel		Homburg	St.-Johann	Forbach	Falkenberg on this side	
	XII Army Corps		Landstuhl		Zweibrücken	Rohrbach	Saarunion	Rohrbach Kuttingen	
First Army	VII Army Corps	About Trier	Ob. Zerf	Merzig		Saarlouis	Bolchen	Pange	
	VIII Army Corps			Saarburg		Merzig	Busendorf	St.-Barbe	
Third Army	V Army Corps	Landau	Weissenburg	Reichshofen	Ingweiler	[1]	Drulingen	Mittersheim above Wolfskirchen	
	XI Army Corps	On Klingbach	Weissenburg	Walburg	Buchsweiler	[1]	Lützelstein	Finstingen	

[1] The rest-day for the Third Army can be changed according to circumstances.

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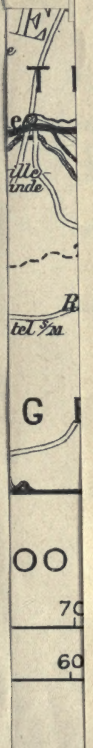
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